

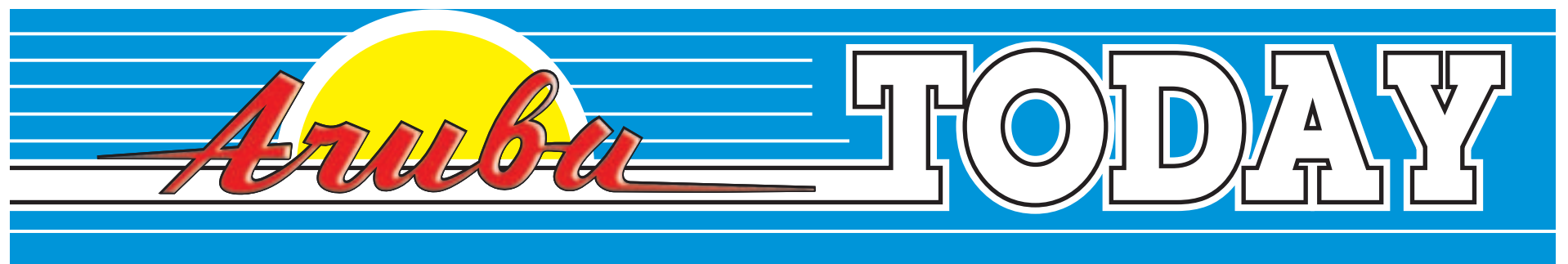
CHOPPER RESCUES ALL 52 PASSENGERS FROM ANTARCTICA

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TORONTO MAYOR ROB FORD FILES TO RE-RUN FOR OFFICE

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On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Friday, January 3, 2014

Consumers Start Using Coverage From Health Law

ROBERT PEAR
ABBY GOODNOUGH
© 2014 New York Times
WASHINGTON - Kathy Hornbach of Tucson, Ariz., is not wasting any time before using her new health insurance coverage, which took effect on New Year's Day.



William Hannah, who has had no health insurance for the past 20 years, but is now covered as of New Year's Day, at his home in Cleveland, Ga. (V. Kippelen/NYT)

Hornbach, 57, has an appointment with a cardiologist this week for a stress test.

"I've had some heart palpitations, and my mom's side has a history of heart problems starting early," she said Wednesday in a telephone interview. "So it's mostly just to double-check that everything is OK."

Hornbach, a breast cancer survivor who retired early from the technology industry, said that insurance companies in Arizona had refused to cover her.

Continued on page 5

LET IT SNOW!



A pedestrian walks through the snow outside the state Capitol on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014, in Albany, N.Y. Up to 5 inches of snow have fallen in eastern New York Thursday, but the National Weather Service said some areas from Buffalo to Albany could get up to 12 inches by the time the storm subsides on Friday.

(AP Photo/Mike Groll)

Fierce winter storm pushes into the Northeast

RODRIQUE NGOWI
JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A storm expected to bring more than a foot of snow, powerful winds and punishing cold pushed into the Northeast on Thursday, extending Christmas break for some students while posing the first test for New York's new mayor and perhaps the last challenge for Boston's outgoing one.

Some schools in New England and New York closed

well ahead of the snow, while cities mobilized plows and salt spreaders, and state offices sent workers home early. Some major highways were ordered closed overnight. U.S. airlines canceled more than 1,800 flights nationwide on Thursday in advance of the storm.

The heavy weather began rolling in just a day after New York Mayor Bill de Blasio was sworn in to lead the nation's largest city and a few days before Boston

Mayor Thomas Menino ends 20 years in office.

Menino announced a parking ban and said schools would be closed Friday in Boston, where up to 14 inches of snow was expected. Boston's airport said it would not handle any flights after 8:30 p.m. Thursday.

"What a New Year's gift, to receive one last snowstorm as mayor," said Menino, whose successor takes office Monday.

De Blasio, who as pub-

lic advocate in 2010 criticized predecessor Mayor Michael Bloomberg for his handling of a post-Christmas storm, said hundreds of plows and salt spreaders would be on the streets as soon as the snow started falling Thursday night.

"We have to get it right, no question about it," de Blasio said. "We are focused like a laser on protecting this city and getting everyone ready."

Continued on page 4

Antarctica:

Helicopter rescues 52 passengers from trapped ship



Passengers from the trapped Russian vessel MV Akademik Shokalskiy, seen at right, prepare to board the Chinese helicopter Xueying 12 in the Antarctic Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

(AP Photo/Xinhua, Zhang Jiansong)

ALAN COWELL
EDWARD WONG
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LONDON - In a dramatic operation displaying unusual international harmony in one of the world's most remote and inhospitable places, a red-and-white Chinese helicopter

Thursday rescued 52 passengers trapped for more than a week aboard an icebound Russian research ship in Antarctica, ferrying them a dozen at a time to an Australian icebreaker. The helicopter, based on a Chinese icebreaker, the Xue Long, or Snow Dragon,

flew several sorties across miles of packed ice to pluck scientists, tourists and journalists from a makeshift landing zone next to the marooned MV Akademik Shokalskiy research vessel. The Russian ship was surrounded by such a dense and extensive pack of ice

that it could not move and vessels designed to break through ice could not get near.

As the rescue got underway with the arrival of the Chinese helicopter, Chris Turney, a leader of the research expedition and a professor of climate change at the University of New South Wales in Australia, said in a message on Twitter that the "Chinese helicopter has arrived @ the Shokalskiy. It's 100% we're off! A huge thanks to all."

The rescue was closely followed around the world by scientists and others, with journalists on board sending progress reports as the passengers were lifted to safety aboard the Australian icebreaker, the Aurora Australis.

Before the operation began, rescuers said they were worried that the weather would turn bad and prevent the helicopter from flying.

But, several hours later, Turney sent another message on Twitter saying: "We've

made it to the Aurora australis safe & sound," offering a "huge thanks" to the rescuers. The Australian Maritime Safety Agency, which coordinated the rescue, said the crew of the Aurora Australis had confirmed that the 52 passengers were on board.

The ship is to take the rescued passengers to the Australian island state of Tasmania, arriving there in mid-January.

Separately, the 22 crew members of the Russian research ship planned to stay on board until the ice releases its grip. The ship was well-stocked for a long voyage, passengers said.

The 233-foot Russian research ship had been lodged in the ice since Dec. 24, when powerful winds encircled it with packed ice near Cape de la Motte, about 1,700 miles south of Hobart, Tasmania. The ship had set sail from Bluff, New Zealand, on Dec. 8, embarking on a planned monthlong voyage known as the Australasian Antarctic Expedition. □

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford files ballot to run again

CHARMAINE NORONHA
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Toronto Mayor Rob Ford has put his name on the ballot to run for another term, defying repeated calls for him to step down after admitting he smoked crack "in a drunken stupor."

Ford was the first candidate to show up at City Hall when registration opened Thursday for the city's municipal election Oct. 27.

He promised "Ford more years," the Toronto Star reported.

He also called himself "the best mayor this city has ever had."

"If you want to get personal, that's fine," Ford told reporters, according to the Star. "I'm sticking to my record, and talk is cheap. You're going to see action like you've never seen before."

He was more restrained on

Twitter, tweeting a photo of himself signing up to run again and saying simply, "Just filed my paperwork for the 2014 election. Vote on October 27th."

The conservative mayor of Canada's largest city has said he would run again, even after the revelations last year about his drug use pushed him into the international media spotlight. Ford has faced intense pressure to resign over that and other erratic behavior that has embarrassed many Canadians.

The Toronto City Council has stripped Ford of most of his powers,

but he continues to receive support from some in the city's more conservative suburbs. He first won as mayor by promising to "stop the gravy train" of government spending.

Reactions were swift but mixed Thursday after Ford



Toronto Mayor Rob Ford officially shows his passport to a city clerk Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014, as he registered as a candidate for the city's 2014 municipal election in October.

(AP Photo/Victor Biro)

signed up to run again. "That pathetic excuse for a mayor should get the hell out and stop embarrassing this beautiful city," said Inna Evtoushenko, 36, a Toronto resident.

Derek Killins disagreed. "Other than embarrass the hell out of himself and the city as a public figure, has he done anything pertaining to his job that was detrimental to the city's well-

being from a financial or economical standpoint?" the resident of neighboring Waterloo said. "Most people I ask say that he's done a good job for the city otherwise." □

After train blasts, US warns about Bakken crude oil

MATTHEW BROWN

Associated Press

BILLINGS, Montana (AP) — Crude oil being shipped by rail from the U.S. Northern Plains across the country and Canada may be more flammable than traditional forms of oil, U.S. officials warned Thursday after a series of explosive accidents.

A safety alert issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation warns the public, emergency responders and shippers about the potential high volatility of the crude being shipped from the Bakken oil shale patch in Montana and North Dakota.

The warning comes after the massive explosion Monday caused by an oil train derailment in North Dakota. No one was hurt, but worries about toxic fumes led to the evacuation of hundreds of residents in a town less than a mile (1.6 kilometers) away.

The oil boom in the Bakken has reduced U.S. reliance on imported oil and brought thousands of jobs to the region. But as companies increasingly rely on trains to get that oil to lucrative coastal markets, public safety in communities bisected by rail lines has become a major concern.

In July, 47 people were killed in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, when a train carrying Bakken crude derailed and exploded. Another oil train derailed and exploded in Alabama in November, killing no one but releasing an estimated 749,000 gallons (2.8 million liters) of oil from 26 tanker cars.

The amount of oil moved by rail has spiked since 2009, from just more than 10,000 tanker cars to a projected 400,000 cars in 2013. The safety alert comes in part from results of preliminary tests on Bakken oil to determine just how dangerous it is, said Jeannie Shiffer with the Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration.

Two newspapers call for clemency for Snowden

RAPHAEL SATTER

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The New York Times and Guardian newspapers have called for clemency for Edward Snowden, saying that the espionage worker-turned-privacy advocate should be praised rather than punished for his disclosures.

The papers — both of which have played a role in publishing Snowden's intelligence trove — suggested late Wednesday that the former National Security Agency contractor's revelations about the United States' world-spanning espionage program were of such public importance that they outweighed any possible wrongdoing.

"Considering the enormous value of the information he has revealed, and the abuses he has exposed, Mr. Snowden deserves better than a life of permanent exile, fear and flight," the Times said, calling either for a plea bargain, some form of clemency, or a "substantially reduced punishment." The Guardian said it hoped "calm heads within the present (U.S.) administration are working on a strategy to allow Mr. Snowden to return to the U.S. with dignity, and the president to use his executive powers to treat him humanely and in a manner that would be a shining example about

the value of whistleblowers and of free speech itself."

Both newspapers published their editorials online within a few hours of one another, but Guardian editor Alan Rusbridger said the papers' appeals weren't coordinated ahead of time.

"Complete coincidence,"

bringing things to a head.

"We both had the same thought — that, after the rather extraordinary events just before Xmas ... it (would) be (good) to say something at year end," he said. Snowden is currently residing in Russia following an abortive attempt to trav-

weeks after it the idea was first floated by senior NSA official Rick Leggett.

Asked about the proposal in his year-end press conference on Dec. 20, Obama didn't explicitly rule it out, and at least one former member of the intelligence community suggested the



This Sunday, June 9, 2013 photo provided by The Guardian Newspaper shows Edward Snowden in Hong Kong. The New York Times and Guardian newspapers have called for clemency for Edward Snowden, saying that the espionage worker-turned-privacy advocate should be praised rather than punished for his disclosures.

(AP Photo/The Guardian)

he said in an email. He credited the legal reverses suffered by the NSA's domestic dragnet, the spying reforms suggested by Obama's privacy review team and the Silicon Valley companies' recent summit at the White House with

el to Latin America, where he'd been offered asylum. He faces espionage charges in connection with his leaks, which U.S. officials have described as damaging or even life-threatening, but talk of amnesty has been circulating for several

idea had some traction. Eliza Manningham-Buller, the former chief of Britain's MI5, recently told the BBC she expected "some kind of deal" for Snowden — although she was careful to note that she was simply speculating.

Weinstein family implores captors to free him

DAVID DISHNEAU

Associated Press

HAGERSTOWN, Maryland (AP) — Family members of an American development expert kidnapped in Pakistan by al-Qaida more than two years ago said Thursday that a recently released video and letter haven't convinced them he's alive.

Warren Weinstein's wife, two daughters, son-in-law and grandchildren released a statement asking for "date-specific" confirmation that the 72-year-old is alive and well.

"We are extremely concerned about his health and implore his captors

to attend to his medical needs. More importantly, we ask that they find it in their hearts to release him immediately so he may return home to us for the additional urgent care he needs," the family statement read.

Weinstein appeared in a video sent last week to reporters in Pakistan, appealing to President Barack Obama to negotiate his release. It was the first video to show Weinstein since September 2012. There was no indication of when it was made.

An accompanying, handwritten note was dated Oct. 3.

The family statement didn't specify Weinstein's medical needs. His employer, J.E. Austin Associates, has said Weinstein needs medication used for treating heart problems.

The statement said family members "have been told the U.S. government is doing what it can to assist in his return, but are not aware of what those efforts are to date."

The White House has called for Weinstein's immediate release but has said it won't negotiate with al-Qaida. The State Department said Monday that officials were actively working with Pakistani authorities to try to se-

cure his release.

Weinstein's family also expressed gratitude for the efforts of Rep. John Delaney, D-Maryland, whose district includes Rockville. Delaney said in a statement he has given the family his personal assurance that he will continue to press for Weinstein's release.

"Warren Weinstein is an American being held captive by our enemies and this singular fact cannot be forgotten, overlooked, or marginalized. We must be relentless in our efforts to bring him home and we must maintain a sense of outrage and determination," Delaney said.

Fierce winter storm pushes into the Northeast

Continued from Front

"We have all hands on deck."

Snow began falling overnight Wednesday in parts of New England and New York state, but the brunt of the storm wasn't expected until late Thursday. Forecasters said temperatures would plummet, with some areas seeing highs just above zero and wind-chill readings of minus-10 and colder.

The National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning for Cape Cod and Long Island, where 8 to 10 inches of snow could fall and winds could gust to 45 mph.

"We're going to see a lot

of snow and a lot of wind," forecaster Jason Tuell said. "We're concerned about whiteout conditions possibly tonight with the blowing and drifting snow."

Douglass Bibule shopped for rock salt and other supplies at a home improvement store in Watertown, Mass.

"Well, there will be some shoveling that I will have to do and some sanding. I've got to go home and do some stretching exercises to make sure I don't hurt myself while doing that, and do a little shopping to make sure that we have all the supplies that we need. We need food because we have three older children at home."

Interior southern New England and New York state



Snow accumulates on the tinted windows of a bus stop as pedestrians walks on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014, in Portland, Maine. Blizzard-like conditions with a wind chill factor of minus 30 degrees are expected before the storm clears out on Friday.

(AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

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could get up to a foot of snow. New York City was expecting 8 inches, while Philadelphia could see 3 to 7.

In New York, Con Ed spokesman Sidney Alvarez said the utility was expecting the snow to be powdery rather than wet and heavy, "but with any type of snow, you're looking at extra weight on branches that can snap and bring power lines down."

"Santa brought me a snow-blower, and I've got rock salt for the ice, so now I'm just waiting for the storm," Jonas Caldwell said in Toms River, N.J.

Caldwell, an investment adviser, said he could work from home if necessary, but he was hoping that wouldn't be the case.

"There are too many distractions at home," he said. "But I won't be stupid. ... If it gets as bad as they say it will be, or looks like it will, I'll be staying put."

As the storm pushed eastward on New Year's Day and Thursday, it dropped as much as 18 inches on suburban Chicago and up to a foot on Michigan, prompting the cancellation Wednesday of hundreds of flights in and out of Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Below-zero cold is expected across the region over the next few days.

AAA Michigan said it received 500 calls by mid-morning Thursday from drivers dealing with spin-outs, cars in ditches and dead batteries. Accidents and delays were also reported from Missouri to New Hampshire.

"Anything below 25 degrees and the salt isn't nearly as effective," said Becky Allmeroth, a maintenance engineer with the state of Missouri, where crews were mixing chemicals and beet juice with salt to try to make roads passable. □

Vermont ski slopes get early start

WILSON RING MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) —

The state's ski areas say the early season is looking good, despite some rain, with the slopes full of skiers, many of whom are staying in area hotels and eating in local restaurants.

Even though northern Ver-

mont is expected to get only a dusting of snow in a storm forecast to hit southern New England and parts of New York on Thursday and Friday, snow down-country boosts interest in skiing, sending people north to the slopes, said JJ Toland. □

Taking office, de Blasio vows a fight on inequality



Mayor Bill de Blasio, right, and his family, from left: daughter Chiara, son Dante and wife Chirlane McCray, wave to the crowd at his inauguration in New York, Jan. 1, 2014. De Blasio's rise to the country's most prominent municipal job has fanned the hopes of liberals that the causes he favors, such as universal prekindergarten and minimum wage hikes, will be elevated.

(Chang W. Lee/The New York Times)

Michael M. Grynbaum
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NEW YORK - Bill de Blasio, whose fiery populism propelled his rise from obscure neighborhood official to the 109th mayor of New

York, was sworn into office Wednesday, pledging that his ambition for a more humane and equal metropolis would remain undimmed. In his inaugural address, de Blasio described so-

cial inequality as a "quiet crisis" on a par with the other urban cataclysms of the city's last half-century, from fiscal collapse to crime waves to terrorist attacks, and said income

disparity was a struggle no less urgent to confront. "We are called to put an end to economic and social inequalities that threatened to unravel the city we love," he said to about 5,000 people at the ceremony, many beneath blankets on a numbingly cold day. De Blasio, 52, the first liberal to lead City Hall in two decades, delivered his critiques as his predecessor, Michael R. Bloomberg, whose Wall Street pedigree and his business-first approach to governance seemed to embody the city's current gilded era, sat unsmiling merely a few feet away. It was one of many potent symbols of change that dominated a ceremony

unlike many before it. Gone was the more solemn air of inaugurations past, replaced by the booming strains of disco, soul, and dance music by the Commodores, Marvin Gaye, and Daft Punk, spun by a local DJ stationed high above the audience. (Even Hillary Rodham Clinton, seated onstage, swayed with the music.) Several of the nation's pre-eminent Democrats - including Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and former President Bill Clinton, who administered the oath of office over a Bible once owned by Franklin D. Roosevelt - appeared with de Blasio on the dais, celebrating the elevation of a party stalwart with whom they had close ties. □

Consumers start using health coverage

Continued from Front

This was until about two years ago, when she got a policy with monthly premiums of \$285 and a deductible of \$5,500 a year. Last month, using the federal insurance exchange, she bought a midlevel silver plan with lower premiums and deductible.

"It's a better policy - lower out-of-pocket, more

choice of doctors," she said. "This is a very happy day." Consumers around the country began using coverage provided by the new health care law Wednesday, the same day that Medicaid expanded to hundreds of thousands of people in about half the states. Many provisions of the 2010 health care law offering new benefits and protections to consumers, including those with pre-ex-

isting conditions, also took effect.

Hospitals said they were getting ready for an influx of newly insured patients, but many health care providers said the pace was slower than usual because of the New Year's holiday. In a typical report, Clay Holtzman, a spokesman for Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, said the system's hospitals were not seeing an immediate surge.

"We might at some point down the road, since we have spent a lot of time informing uninsured patients of their options under the exchange and expanded Medicaid," Holtzman said in an email. "But it depends on if those patients chose plans that include us."

In San Antonio, at a 24-hour Walgreens store, only a few vehicles were lined up at the drive-through window at midday, and no one was waiting in line to pick up prescriptions at the pharmacy counter. □



William Hannah, who has had no health insurance for the past 20 years, but is now covered as of New Year's Day, at his home in Cleveland, Ga.

(V. Kippelen/NYT)

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Boeing contract vote highlights rift in Machinists' union

STEVEN GREENHOUSE
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After Boeing's workers in Washington state voted down an eight-year contract extension in November, Boeing wasted little time in soliciting offers from other states to build its new 777X aircraft.

Within weeks, 22 states made proposals to Boeing, with some offering billions of dollars in subsidies to lure a project that would mean thousands of jobs and the prestige of having such a prominent manufacturer. All this so alarmed the leaders of the main union representing Boeing workers, the International Association of Machinists, that its president has brushed aside the objections of the local union and ordered a new vote - scheduled for Friday - on a slightly revised version of the contract.

The dispute highlights a rift within the union, one that reflects the varying priorities of its leadership. Union officials in Washington state want to preserve gains hard won from a company that has surging profits and record plane orders. But the international leadership sees a different threat - the possibility of losing a large manufacturing center and more than 10,000 union jobs to a right-to-work state where it would be difficult to win

representation. And that could mean a big loss in dues - Boeing workers in the Puget Sound area paid \$25.5 million in dues to the international union in 2012. Boeing has promised to put final assembly of the 777X in the Seattle area, as well as fabrication of the aircraft's wings, if the 31,000 Boeing machinists vote to approve the revised deal. But that is by no means a sure thing. The president of the international union, R. Thomas Buffenbarger, defied union leaders in the Puget Sound area by ordering the new vote, and those leaders are urging Boeing workers to once again vote down the extension, which calls for numerous concessions.

In a message to Boeing workers in the Puget Sound area, Thomas Wroblewski, president of Machinists Union District Lodge 751, which is based there, said, "Because of the massive takeaways, the union is adamantly recommending members reject this offer." Wroblewski has asserted that the revised deal is not different enough from the previous deal - which was rejected 67 to 33 percent - to warrant a new vote. District 751's leaders oppose Boeing's demand that the machinists approve a deal that would freeze their pensions in favor of



Wilson Ferguson, right, leads an International Association of Machinists meeting in Seattle, Dec. 30, 2013. Labor leaders there hope to reject a contract extension with Boeing, but the union's national leaders are urging them to reconsider, fearful of the long-term repercussions if the plane manufacturer moves assembly of its new 777X to a state with weaker labor laws.

(Stuart Isett/The New York Times)

less generous, riskier 401(k) plans. District 751's leaders also voice dismay that the deal would increase out-of-pocket health spending and includes raises totaling just 4 percent over eight years. If the machinists reject the revised deal, Boeing will continue its search on where to locate assembly of the 777X. The 777 is a long-range, twin-aisle aircraft that carries about 365 passengers. The 777X, which Boeing hopes to begin delivering by 2020, would be about one-fifth more fuel-efficient and

carry up to 400 passengers. Washington state, where the 777 is assembled, has promised Boeing \$8.7 billion in tax breaks through 2040 if it puts the final assembly of the 777X in the state. Some workers resent being asked to approve a deal filled with concessions when Boeing has record profits and a record backlog of \$400 billion in orders. And those objections have grown since Boeing's board decided two weeks ago to raise the company's dividend about 50 percent and approve a \$10 billion stock buyback.

"The optics of this are not good," said Richard L. Aboulafia, an aerospace analyst with the Teal Group in Fairfax Va. "Boeing couldn't have timed this any worse from a negotiating standpoint."

Many Boeing workers complain that the parent union has scheduled the vote for Friday, when many will still be on vacation for the holiday season. Many machinists also say they are not being given enough time to study and discuss the revised proposal - the new vote was announced four days before Christmas.

Frank Larkin, communications director for the machinists' parent union, said it was vital to hold the vote soon. "The timing was driven largely by Boeing's

attempt to announce in early January its plans for where it will place assembly of the 777X."

On Dec. 26, Buffenbarger, the international's president, sent a letter to the 31,000 workers eligible to vote, praising the revised deal, without specifically urging a yes vote.

"The total value of the new improvements to the contract offer adds more than \$1 billion to the previous offer," he wrote. "I believe this represents a significant improvement worthy of the membership's consideration." Buffenbarger said the revised deal added a \$5,000 one-time payment, payable in January 2020, on top of the \$10,000 bonus Boeing had previously promised upon ratification. In the biggest revision, the new proposal would preserve the current six-year "progression" it takes for new workers to reach full pay. In the first deal, that would have taken 16 years. A Seattle television station, KING-TV, reported that Boeing sent a letter on Tuesday to all machinists preparing to vote. The letter was written by Alan May, vice president for human resources at Boeing Commercial Airplanes, and said that a yes vote would "secure jobs in the Puget Sound region for the next decade and beyond." □



Workers assemble a Boeing 777 at the company's plant in Everett, Wash. Management threatens to move production of the new 777X to another state have created a schism between state and national International Association of Machinists leaders, with the former wanting to stand firm in contract talks, and the latter fearing the repercussions should Boeing relocate to a state with weaker labor laws.

(Stuart Isett/The New York Times)

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US Financial Front:

American construction spending up 1% in November

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. construction spending rose in November at the strongest pace in more than four years, driven by solid gains in home construction and commercial projects. The Commerce Department said construction spending increased 1 percent in November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$934.4 billion. That's the fastest rate since March 2009 and a slight improvement on the revised 0.9 percent gain in October. Residential construction rose 1.9 percent in November, after falling in October. Homebuilding last exceeded the November pace shortly before the 2008 financial crisis. Spending on single-family homes has increased 18.4 percent year over year, while spending on apartment buildings is up 36.3 percent during the same period. Those gains are a positive sign for the overall econo-



A guard tower, lower right, from Louisiana State Penitentiary, also known as "Angola" and "The Farm" is lowered into the construction site of The National Museum of African American History and Culture, beside the Washington Monument, in Washington. The government reported positive data on U.S. construction spending in November on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

(AP Photo/Cliff Owen)

my. More than two-thirds of the residential construction market comes from single-family homes.

Each new home creates an average of three jobs for a year and generates about \$90,000 in tax revenue, ac-

cording to National Association of Home Builders. The new construction suggests that builders expect buying to continue picking up in 2014.

The construction gains might restart some of the

momentum for home sales that has stalled in recent months. Increasing mortgage rates and home prices have hurt affordability. Mortgage rates are nearly a full percentage point higher than in the spring,

even though they are close to historic lows.

Rates rose in May when the Federal Reserve first signaled that it might slow its \$85 billion in monthly bond purchases, a move Fed officials made after made after a December meeting.

The higher rates have also helped to encourage apartment construction.

As homes become less affordable, more people choose to rent, increasing the demand for apartments and causing builders to begin new residential projects.

Commercial projects also increased 2.7 percent in November. Spending on offices, communication projects and transportation projects contributed to the increase.

Government construction spending fell 1.8 percent after strong gains in October. Declines in expenditures on roadways, health care facilities and sewer systems led much of the decrease.

US weekly unemployment benefit claims fall to 339K

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment benefits dipped 2,000 last week to a seasonally adjusted 339,000, evidence that layoffs are low and hiring likely will remain steady. The Labor Department said Thursday that the less volatile four-week average rose 8,500 to 357,250. The average was driven up in recent weeks by spikes that reflected seasonal volatility around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. The government struggles to account for seasonal hiring

by retailers and other businesses and for temporary layoffs of school employees during the holidays.

Applications are a proxy for layoffs. They are at a level consistent with solid hiring. The job market has picked up in recent months. Employers have added an average of 200,000 jobs a month from August through November. That's helped lower the unemployment rate to a five-year low of 7 percent. There have been other signs the economy is improving. Americans are more confident and spending more. And orders to U.S. manufacturers jumped in

November, evidence that businesses are spending more on factory-made items such as machinery, computers and electrical goods.

Not all the data have been positive: Income rose at a slower pace than spending last month. That means Americans saved less to spend more. And existing home sales have fallen for three straight months, held back by higher prices and mortgage rates.

Still, the economy expanded at a 4.1 percent annual rate in the July-September quarter, the best growth in nearly two

years. The healthy gain largely reflected a jump in restocking. That's unlikely to be repeated in the current October-December quarter. But many economists have become more optimistic about the fourth quarter and expect growth will clock in at a solid 2.5 percent annual rate.

Nearly 4.5 million people received benefits in the week ending Dec. 14, the latest data available. That's 180,000 more than the previous week. Nearly 1.4 million of those recipients are getting benefits under an emergency program put in place five years ago and

paid for by the federal government. The program provided up to 47 extra weeks of benefits. But it expired last week and will cut off benefits for about 1.3 million people, according to the National Employment Law Project, an advocacy group. The impact probably won't show up in the data until mid-January, because the figures for total benefit recipients are released with a two-week lag.

Economists predict that the benefit cutoff will cause the unemployment rate to fall by as much as a quarter of percentage point in early 2014.

Hezbollah neighborhood in Beirut bombed

ANNE BARNARD

© 2014 New York Times

BEIRUT - A powerful explosion hit the southern suburbs of Beirut on Thursday afternoon in a neighborhood populated by supporters of Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shiite militia and political party, in what appeared to be the latest in a spree of bombings and reprisal bombings over Hezbollah's support for the government of neighboring Syria in that country's civil war.

Hezbollah's Al Manar television channel showed scenes of chaos in a residential area, with smoke rising above charred cars, crowds of people pushing past one another and ambulances and fire trucks arriving at the scene. The channel said at least three people had been killed and eight wounded.

The blast came six days after a car bomb killed a prominent member of the Future bloc, the Sunni party that is Hezbollah's main political rival. And it came a day after reports surfaced of the arrest by Lebanese authorities of a Saudi militant who leads the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, a group affiliated with al-Qaida that claimed responsibility for a Novem-

ber suicide bombing at the Beirut Embassy of Iran, Hezbollah's ally.

The recent bombings are part of a string of escalating attacks in recent months believed to be related to the nearly three-year conflict in Syria, which has deepened Lebanon's pre-existing political and sectarian divisions. Hezbollah

backs the Syrian government, sending its fighters to aid the army, and the Future movement backs the insurgency, which Lebanese Sunni militants have crossed the border to join. In a video statement last week, a cleric acting as a spokesman for the Abdullah Azzam Brigades declared that the group

would not stop its bombings until Hezbollah withdraws its fighters from Syria and Lebanese authorities release youths imprisoned for militant activities. Lebanese officials had expressed concern after the arrest of the group's leader, Majid al-Majid, about the possibility of retaliatory attacks. □



Lebanese citizens gather at the site of a car bomb explosion in a stronghold of the Shiite Hezbollah group at the southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. A large explosion took place during rush hour in the Haret Hreik neighborhood.

(AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

Musharraf taken to Pakistani military hospital

SALMAN MASOOD

© 2014 New York Times

ISLAMABAD - Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's former military ruler, was suddenly taken to a military hospital Thursday while he was being transported to a hearing to face accusations of treason, lawyers and police officials said.

A senior police official told Justice Faisal Arab, who is heading a three-member panel of the special court that is hearing the case, that Musharraf had developed a "heart problem."

Musharraf, a former army chief, had just reached the premises of the court in Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, when his convoy went to a hospital in the neighboring garrison city of Rawalpindi.



Supporters of Pakistan's former president and military ruler Pervez Musharraf gather outside a military hospital where Musharraf is admitted in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

(AP Photo/B.K. Bangash)

A spokesman for Musharraf said he was admitted to the intensive care unit of the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology and was undergoing tests.

Musharraf, 70, who seized power in a military coup in 1999 and ruled until he was forced to resign in 2008, is accused of subverting the constitution when he imposed emergency rule in November 2007.

The treason proceedings are unprecedented in the country's history. However, Musharraf has denounced the trial as a political vendetta.

He has been reluctant to appear at the hearings, and his lawyers have been pressing for him to be exempted from having to attend. □

China fires top official in vote buying scandal

BEIJING (AP) — A senior Chinese provincial official has been fired and expelled from the Communist Party for negligence in a massive vote-buying scandal, the party's internal anti-graft arm said Thursday.

The party's discipline commission said that Tong Mingqian failed to take "timely and effective measures" in the central city of Hengyang to address reports of bribery in the city legislature's selection of provincial representatives.

The scandal "inflicts great losses to the interests of the party, country and the people, and leaves a harmful political and social impact," the commission said in an announcement on its website. It said Tong's case had been handed over to judicial authorities. The scandal in Hengyang city was reported Dec. 28 when the city dismissed most members of its legislature after they were found to have taken millions of dollars in bribes.

At the time of his dismissal, Tong was vice-chairman of an advisory body to Hunan province's legislature. He was being punished for his alleged role in the scandal when he was Hengyang city's party boss and oversaw the appointment of municipal representatives to the Hunan provincial legislative body, which city lawmakers decide by voting.

Provincial authorities disqualified 56 delegates from Hengyang who were found to have paid more than \$18 million in bribes to gain entry to the provincial body. Authorities in Hengyang dismissed 512 lawmakers for accepting bribes, while another six quit, making up the bulk of its 529-member legislature, state media said.

Chinese legislative bodies at all levels are essentially bodies that rubber-stamp decisions by the party, but a seat on such a body is highly coveted because it provides status, networking opportunities and proximity to power. □

Former Rwandan spymaster found dead in Johannesburg

LYDIA POLGREEN

ALAN COWELL

© 2014 New York Times

JOHANNESBURG - South

African police said Thursday that they had opened a murder investigation into the death of an exiled former spy chief from Rwanda and critic of President Paul Kagame, who was found dead in a hotel room with signs of possible strangulation.

The body of Patrick Karegeya, a onetime head of Rwanda's military intelligence, was found at the upscale Michelangelo Towers hotel. He was "dead on the bed," a police statement said. "Preliminary investigations revealed that his neck was swollen. A towel with blood and a rope were found in the hotel room safe. There is a possibility that he might have been strangled."

The killing raised the prospect of Rwanda's political feuds spilling far beyond the country's borders.

Karegeya, 53, a former ally of Kagame who turned against him, fled to South

eral years ago after being accused of plotting a coup. Nyamwasa survived



Undated photo taken in Kigale, Rwanda, of Patrick Karegeya, Rwanda's former spy chief who was found dead, possibly strangled, in a hotel in South Africa, police said Thursday Jan 2 2014. Rwandan dissidents accused President Paul Kagame of ordering the death of Karegeya, a former Kagame ally who turned against him. Kagame's government vehemently denies it has targeted dissidents. (AP Photo)

Africa along with a former army chief, Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa, sev-

a shooting in the driveway of his home here in 2010. As on that occasion, the

opposition Rwanda National Congress accused Kagame's government of seeking to assassinate its foes. "By killing its opponents, the criminal regime in Kigali seeks to intimidate and silence the Rwandan people into submission," the group said in a statement Thursday.

While authorities in Rwanda had no immediate comment on the death of Karegeya, they had frequently accused him of plotting a violent revolution, blaming exiled Rwandans in South Africa for a series of grenade attacks around the time of elections in 2010.

"There cannot be any change through election but through violent means," Karegeya said at the time.

In 2011, Nyamwasa, Karegeya and two other exiled dissidents were tried in Rwanda in absentia and sentenced to 20 years in prison for threatening state security. "We en-

courage the authorities to really look into the matter so that we know exactly what happened," Reuters quoted Rwanda's ambassador to South Africa, Vincent Karega, as saying Thursday. According to The Associated Press, Theogene Rudasingwa, an official of the Rwanda National Congress, said Karegeya had gone to the Michelangelo Towers to meet a man presenting himself as a friend of the opposition, who was identified only as Apollo. The rivalries in Rwanda date to the 1980s, when Rwandans fought alongside Ugandan rebels supporting President Yoweri Museveni, who, once in power, sponsored Kagame's own insurgency. As the military spymaster, Karegeya wielded significant influence for a decade before he fell out with Kagame, who took power in 1994. He was stripped of his rank and fled the country in 2006. □

Former Israeli PM Sharon in critical condition

IAN DEITCH

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who has been in a coma for eight years, was in critical condition on Thursday, clinging to life after a decline in the functioning of various bodily organs, his doctors said.

Dr. Zeev Rotstein, director of Tel Hashomer hospital, said Sharon's condition had deteriorated over the past two days and that a number of vital organs, including his kidneys, were suffering from "critical malfunction." His family was at his bedside, he added.

"He is in critical condition and his life is definitely in danger," Rotstein told reporters at the hospital, just outside Tel Aviv. "The feeling of the doctors treating him and also that of the family with him is that there is a turn for the worse."

Israeli TV stations were broadcasting live from the

hospital where they reported all the comings and goings while special retrospectives on his life were aired along with interviews with old friends and political allies. Old interviews with his were shown, highlighting the charming, grandfatherly image he cultivated later in life. Sharon's medical condition also dominated the front pages of newspapers and radio shows all day.

Visiting U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also addressed his condition ahead of a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"My thoughts are with the Sharon family as they sit in vigil with the former prime minister of Israel, Arik Sharon," Kerry said, referring to Sharon by his nickname. "We remember his contributions, sacrifices he made to ensure the survival and the well-being of Israel, and I have many personal

thoughts about my meetings with him on many different occasions — always robust and strong and clear about his positions."

The 85-year-old Sharon, one of Israel's most iconic and controversial figures, has been in a coma since suffering a devastating stroke in January 2006. At the time, he was prime minister and at the height of his political power. His condition has largely been out of the spotlight since, as his two sons have cared for him while restricting most access to outsiders. Sharon's career has stretched across Israel's 65-year history.

As one of Israel's most famous generals, Sharon was known for bold tactics and an occasional refusal to obey orders. As a politician he became known as "the bulldozer" — a man contemptuous of his critics while also capable of getting things done.



In this Sunday Jan. 30, 2005 photo, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pauses during the weekly cabinet meeting in his Jerusalem office. Sharon, who has been in a coma for eight years, was in critical condition on Thursday, clinging to life after a decline in the functioning of various bodily organs, his doctors said. (AP Photo/Oded Balilty)

Sharon is credited with helping turn the tide of the 1973 Mideast war when Arab armies launched a surprise attack on Israel on the solemn fasting day of

Yom Kippur, causing large Israeli casualties. He led an Israeli force across the Suez Canal, trapping part of the Egyptian army and turning the war in Israel's favor. □

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Iraqis battle militant uprising in 2 cities

QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
SINAN SALAHEDDIN

Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraqi security forces and allied tribesmen on Thursday battled to put down al-Qaida-linked gunmen who, in a coordinated surge, ran rampant in two of the country's main Sunni cities, overrunning police stations and sweeping through the streets, emboldened by mounting sectarian tensions between minority Sunnis and the Shiite-led government.

Troops hammered the militants with Hellfire rockets recently sent by the United States to help the government's fight against al-Qaida's branch in the country, which also operates with increasing strength in Syria's civil war across the border. The militants' swift uprising a day early overwhelmed police forces in Ramadi and Fallujah, two cities in the Sunni heartland of Anbar province that were once strongholds for militants battling U.S. troops in the country.

Al-Qaida's Iraq branch, known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, appeared to be trying to exploit Sunni anger after authorities the past week arrested a senior Sunni politician accused of terrorism and dismantled a months-old sit-in in Ramadi by Sunnis protesting discrimination the Shiite-led government. Those moves added new fuel to sectarian violence that has escalated for the past year in the country since the American withdrawal.



Firemen lay on the ground near the residence of Palestinian ambassador to the Czech Republic, Jamel al-Jamal, in Prague on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014. The ambassador died in an explosion that occurred when he opened an office safe that officials say had been left untouched for more than 20 years.

(AP Photo /Katerina Sulova)

Diplomat's daughter says Prague death suspicious

KAREL JANICEK

Associated Press

PRAGUE (AP) — The mystery behind a booby-trapped safe that exploded and killed the Palestinian ambassador in Prague deepened Thursday with the diplomat's daughter rejecting accounts given by a Palestinian official and suggesting there could be more to the story.

Ambassador Jamel al-Jamal, 56, died Wednesday of massive injuries when an old embassy safe exploded. The career diplomat had only started his posting in October.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki said Wednesday the safe had been inside the offices of the Palestinian Liberation Organization since the 1980s, and that it had been left untouched for more than 20 years. He also said no foul play was suspected.

But on Thursday, Palestinian Embassy spokesman Nabil El-Fahel contradicted Malki's statement when he told Czech radio that the safe had been in constant use.

There was no immediate explanation for the contradiction, but it raised an important question: If the safe had been in constant use, why didn't it explode before al-Jamal opened it?

"The Palestinian official account is baseless," the ambassador's daughter, 30-year-old Rana Al-Jamal, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview from Ramallah in the West Bank. "The safe box has been in regular use — my mom (who lives there) told me that. The box was moved a day earlier and apparently something happened in the way."

"We, the family, believe it is a crime, and we need to find out what happened."

She did not elaborate on what she thought may have occurred.

Police spokeswoman Andrea Zoulova said it appeared that the door of the safe had been booby-trapped, but it was unclear how al-Jamal tried to open it or what type of safe it was. It was also unclear what caused the safe to explode.

Zoulova told the AP on Thursday that nothing had been found to suggest the diplomat had been a victim of a crime, but she declined to elaborate.

Weapons, however, were found and were considered illegal because they were not registered, Zoulova said. It was unclear what type of weapons were found at the complex.



Iraqi federal policemen search a car at a checkpoint in Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, 340 miles (550 kilometers) southeast of Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

(AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

Egypt airs alleged terror confession

MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian authorities produced on Thursday what they said was a confession by the son of a senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood, trying to bolster accusations that the Islamist group has links to al-Qaida-inspired militants. In a news conference, the interior minister aired the recording said to be of Yahia Mongi, son of a Brotherhood lawmaker, in which he says he joined the Ansar Beit al-Maqdis or Champions of Jerusalem group. Mohammed Ibrahim said Mongi was part of a seven-member cell that carried out a suicide

bombing of a provincial security headquarters last month. The Ansar took responsibility for the blast, as well as other attacks.

The charge that the Brotherhood has links to Ansar Beit al-Maqdis is central to the government's case for labelling the group, from which ousted President Mohammed Morsi hails, as a terrorist organization. The confession is the first purported piece of hard evidence produced by authorities to make the link.

Human rights advocates say that police frequently use torture and other means of coercion to produce confessions, relying on them in lieu of other

evidence to convict defendants in both ordinary criminal and security trials.

The Brotherhood denies that it practices violence and accuses police of plotting the attacks to find a pretext for a heavier crackdown on its members.

The news conference came as a court set Jan. 28 as the opening date for Morsi's trial along with 130 others in connection to a 2011 jailbreak. It is the third set of charges that Morsi faces. Also, a court in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria sentenced seven secular-leaning activists to two years in prison on charges related to a protest.

As Latvia adopts Euro, future growth is slowing

LIZ ALDERMAN

© 2014 New York Times

PARIS - Dace Utinane, a doctor at a private health center, frowned during a stroll this week through Riga, the capital of Latvia, as she contemplated her country's move to become the newest member of Europe's currency union. "I don't like it - the euro is not my money," Utinane said.

"This has been dictated by people from above. But we're too small to do something about it and protest against it."

In the halls of power, European leaders are taking a starkly different view. On Wednesday, as Latvia became the 18th country to join the euro, they promoted it as a sign that the currency union - even with wrenching growing pains

another question. While most of the European Union's 28 member countries are obliged eventually to ditch their national money for Europe's single currency, skepticism among European citizens about the currency bloc is still alive in many corners. Lithuania is on track to be next in adopting the currency, in 2015. Like Latvia, its neighbor and fellow former Soviet republic, it is eager to link itself to the West, an imperative that has grown starker as Russia seeks to keep a grasp on Ukraine despite recent pro-Western protests there. After 2015, however, eurozone enlargement is set to slow. In Eastern Europe, several countries have not even taken the first step required for euro membership by entering the ex-



Normunds Bremers, the director of Wenden, a furniture production company, who has a positive outlook on Latvia's adoption of the euro, in Riga, Latvia, Jan. 1, 2014.

(Janis Pipars/The New York Times)

achieving a deficit of 3 percent of gross domestic product and keeping debt to 60 percent of the annual GDP.

member states are required to adopt the euro, citizens can still shoot down membership if a government decides to hold a referendum. In Latvia, the government chose not to hold one, given negative public sentiment, and to push the issue through instead.

Around half of Latvians opposed joining the euro, although support rose to-

ward the end of the year. Part of the reluctance among euro-skeptics, economists say, is the fear of losing a degree of sovereignty and of being liable for supporting other countries should any new crisis break out.

The euro's economic troubles have also damaged the currency bloc's image and highlighted flaws in its foundation that have still not been fully addressed. In Britain, which has no intention of adopting the euro, Prime Minister David Cameron has distanced his government even more from the European Union recently. He promised a national vote on exiting the union should he win the next election.

Some resistance may start to melt once the eurozone starts showing tangible signs of recovery after a five-year malaise.

Growth is already starting to rebound in some crisis-hit economies. Ireland recently exited an international bailout and Spain now no longer needs eurozone support for its banks. □



A sign depicts the design for the euro in Latvia, the newest member of Europe's currency union, in Riga, Latvia, Jan. 1, 2014. On Wednesday, as Latvia became the 18th country to join the euro, they promoted it as a sign that the currency union is on a long-term path to achieving its founders' vision of continued expansion.

(Janis Pipars/The New York Times)

that included threats of a breakup - is on a long-term path to achieving its founders' vision of continued expansion.

"Despite the negative headline of the crisis, the basic promise of peace, prosperity and freedom to travel and work still have their appeal," said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank in London. "So the process of euro enlargement has not come to an end."

How quickly it will grow is

change rate mechanism, a sort of waiting room. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have all pushed back their target dates for eurozone membership until near the end of the decade in the face of low public support.

Smaller nations, including Romania and Croatia, have said they are unlikely to adopt the euro until around 2020, partly because their economies cannot quickly meet the criteria. Those include

Denmark may be one of the next to join. Although the idea was defeated in a national referendum in 2000, a new public vote will be held in December 2015. Public support, which improved slightly after euro bills and coins started circulating, plunged again during the euro crisis. Sweden has not taken the steps required to join, and has shown no signs of doing so.

While European Union

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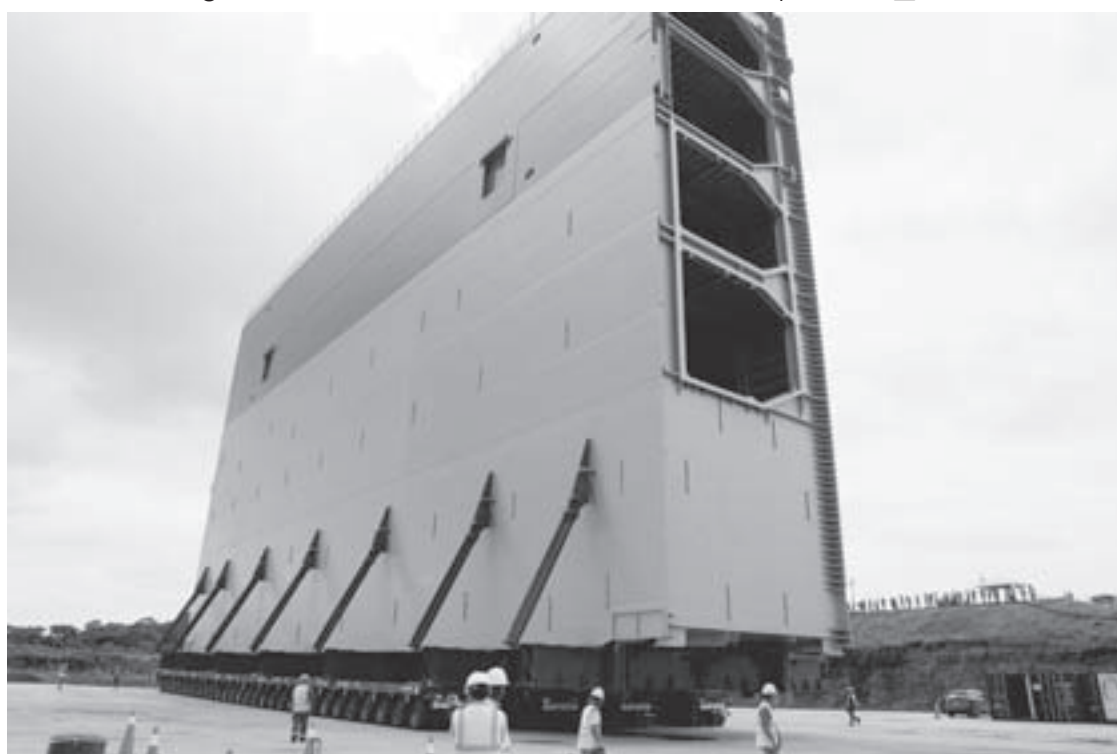
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Panama: Canal contractors warn may halt work

PANAMA CITY, Panama (AP) — The consortium at the heart of a historic Panama Canal expansion project threatened on Wednesday to suspend work due to financial problems caused by a \$1.6 billion cost overrun. The group issued a statement giving the Panama Canal Authority 21 days to settle the dispute, arguing that the Authority is responsible for covering the added costs, but said it will continue working in the meantime. Canal Administrator Jorge L. Qui-

jano responded with his own communique saying the Authority will continue to demand the companies "respect the contract that they themselves accept and signed." He said the purpose of the consortium's warning was "to force the organization to negotiate outside the terms established in the contract." Grupo Unidos por el Canal is formed by Spain's Sacyr Vallehermoso, Impregilo of Italy, Jan De Nul of Belgium and Constructora Urbana SA of Panama. It won the con-

tract to design and build a third set of locks with a \$3.2 billion bid in 2009. Panama has estimated the full expansion program will cost \$5.2 billion, with the new, wider locks allowing the 50-mile (80-kilometer) canal to handle ships far larger than those that can now navigate the century-old waterway. Officials now say the work should be finished by June 2015. Officials say the overall expansion work is 72 percent finished, with the locks themselves at 65 percent. □



A section of the new rolling gates for the Panama Canal's third set of locks towers over workers during a press tour in Gatun, Panama. The consortium carrying out a historic expansion of the Panama Canal says it may have to suspend work due to financial problems caused by a \$1.6 billion cost overrun. The group issued a statement this week giving the Panama Canal Authority 21 days to settle the dispute, but says it will continue working in the meantime.

(AP Photo/Arnulfo Franco)

Cayman Islands: Police believe cruise ship passenger fell

DANICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Police in the Cayman Islands said Wednesday that they suspect a Canadian cruise ship passenger who recently vanished may have fallen off the boat as search crews scoured waters around the British Caribbean territory. Police said they believe the unidentified 65-year-old man may have fallen around dawn on Tuesday about 13 miles (21 kilometers) northwest of Grand Cayman. Police said they

interviewed staff and witnesses aboard the Royal Caribbean Cruises ship and were still investigating the disappearance. "The Port Authority broadcasted an appeal to all marine traffic to be on the lookout for the missing passenger," police said in a statement. The man's wife had reported him missing Tuesday morning as the Independence of the Seas ship prepared to dock at George Town Harbor. Tracy Quan, a spokeswoman for Miami-based Royal Caribbean Cruises,

said Wednesday the investigation was turned over to local authorities before the cruise ship departed and resumed its route. She said the man's wife disembarked in Grand Cayman. Police said the wife told them they went to bed around 1 a.m. Tuesday but that he was gone when she woke up about six hours later. Authorities said they searched the 15-deck, 1,112-foot-long (339-meter-long) craft and reviewed closed-circuit camera footage before the ship departed. □

CARIBBEAN NEWS BRIEFS

Santeria priests predict a woeful 2014

HAVANA (AP) — Afro-Cuban priests are forecasting that the coming year may be marked by outbreaks of disease, environmental disruption and conflict between people and nations that risks spilling into war. A commission of Santeria leaders also predict in their annual "Letter of the Year" that 2014 could see the death of important religious and political figures. They are not naming names in a country where many top leadership positions are occupied by graying octogenarians in power since the 1959 revolution. □

IDB awards \$40.5M to Haitian facility

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — The Inter-American Development Bank plans to award \$40.5 million to help an industrial park in northern Haiti with its expansion. The grant for the Caracol Industrial Park is to finance the construction of canteens, administrative buildings, roads, bicycle lanes and other facilities. The industrial park is anchored by a South Korean textile firm and is the U.S. government's biggest investment in Haiti since a 2010 earthquake destroyed thousands of homes and displaced 1.5 million people. The IDB announced approval of the grant on Thursday. □

Crowley Puerto Rico operations grow

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Crowley Maritime Corporation's deal with Puerto Rico's Port Authority is expected to generate more than \$20 million for the U.S. territory in the next three decades. Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla said last month that Crowley plans to make Puerto Rico its center for Caribbean exports. He said the amount of cargo being moved through the Port of San Juan will increase by nearly 15 percent a year as a result. Garcia said that Crowley, based in Jacksonville, Florida, will also invest \$405 million to build two new barges and create more than 100 permanent jobs. □

Bahamas fire kills 2, burns 50 homes

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Authorities in the Bahamas say a fire in a shantytown has killed at least two people and destroyed an estimated 50 homes, leaving hundreds of people homeless. Assistant Police Commissioner Emerick Seymour says the fire this week began in the Marsh Harbor area in the Abaco Islands. It's an overcrowded community of permanent residents, naturalized citizens and Haitian migrants. The government said it is helping those affected by the fire, and the cause is under investigation. The Abaco Islands are about 180 miles (290 kilometers) east of Florida. □

Guyana plans to monitor fishing boats

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — Guyana's government is urging fishing and shrimping trawlers to install electronic systems on their boats or risk losing their license this year. Fisheries Minister Leslie Ramsammy said this week that the system would help authorities monitor boats and respond to emergencies including pirate attacks. He said the system would also help officials determine whether boats are complying with rules regarding the number of days they are allowed to fish in one year. Ramsammy said boat operators that do not install the system will not be relicensed this year. □



New Record Of Revelers Plunge Into 2014 At Moomba Beach!



PALM BEACH - A record number of happy people jumped into the ocean at noon last Wednesday morning, celebrating the beginning of the New Year at MooMba Beach. More than 400 visitors and locals alike ran like the wind at the signal of DJ Rico Rijk of radio Fresh FM, the station that accompanied the event with great music. Spectators watched as the red-hatted crowd took a gleeful dip before running to the pea soup stand, where countless cups of Dutch pea soup and Unox sausage were doled out. A total of five hundred red Unox hats and 15 gallons of pea soup were distributed, told marketing manager Kevin of the Aruba



Wine And Dine group afterwards. The jump into the ocean, the Nieuwjaarsduik in Dutch, is a tradition that started in 1965. Now more than 46,000 people take a dip worldwide; 10,000 of them in Scheveningen,



Holland. Water temperatures greatly vary per location, as you might imagine. In Holland the temperature was very

reasonable 8 degrees – but what a difference with Aruba! Photos show the warm-up session of zumba courtesy

of Miss Bikini Aruba 2013 Sharon Puy and many happy revelers who welcomed 2014 in great style. A Happy New Year to everyone!



Caribbean Speed Printers celebrates New Year's Eve!



ORANJESTAD – As a normal end of year's tradition, Caribbean Speed Printers, together with Aruba Today and Bon Dia Aruba, celebrated the end of 2013. Management and employees came together to say farwell to the old year



and welcome the new one. The party was entertained by 2sum Band, which members are also part of the team of Caribbean Speed Printers, bringing joy and music to all those who were present. Caribbean Speed Printers, Aruba Today and Bon Dia Aruba wishes one and all a Happy New Year's beginning. □



Beauty on the Beach

Maria Isabel

She is from Bogota, Colombia, her first time in Aruba, she is staying at Occidental Grand and what she loves the most of Aruba are the Beaches.

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Aruba's New Year's Eve Festivities featured in Forbes!

The following article and photographs were posted at Forbes.com by John Giuffo, contributor to Forbes Magazine and Website.

ARUBA'S SURPRISINGLY IMPRESSIVE NEW YEAR'S EVE

"I was initially underwhelmed by Aruba. Overdeveloped, expensive, and chock full of many of the same chain restaurants we're used to in the States, I found the island to be too cozy. If I wanted to dine at Tony Roma's (A Place For Ribs!), I didn't have to leave Queens. Sure, the island had all the sun, surf, rum drinks, and parties one could want for a Caribbean New Year's getaway, but it all seemed a bit too planned. Aruba feels a bit as though it's not really selling Aruba as a destination as much as it's selling a pan-Caribbean island vibe. Bob Marley and Daddy Yankee, Harry Belafonte and Tito Pu-

ente are all on the Aruban beachside bar's greatest hits playlist, and it all feels a little too hodgepodge-y. That's not to complain, mind you: we were on a stunningly beautiful Aruban beach, and we had made plans to go dining and dancing at a Latin jazz spot near our hotel on Eagle Beach, near the island's northwestern corner. We were in our 30s and were among the youngest couples in the joint, but we couldn't have made a better decision. What we got for our (admittedly pricey) cost of admission was an evening of old school romance, in a room full of people who ranged from slightly older than us to 50 years older than us, dancing the night away to the rhythms of a band that has been doing what they were doing for more than 40 years. I'll never dance like grandpa over there, I thought more than once. Those

dudes had moves, and even though we tried out our rudimentary salsa skills, we had nothing on those old folks. Everyone was turned out to the nines, the food was off the chain, but the cap to the evening –



the thing that finally convinced me to relax and enjoy Aruba for all of its contradictions and mixed messages – was the way in which the entire restaurant emptied at a quarter to

midnight, headed up the stairs of the attached parking garage and gathered on the roof to watch what we were promised would be an exciting fireworks display.

We were misinformed. It

but our perch. From where we stood on the third floor of a parking garage that also happened to be one of the highest points on the island, we were able to see the fireworks being set off on the shoreline, 360 degrees around us. Everywhere we turned, there were more fireworks exploding off in the distance. This wasn't one huge fireworks show: it was dozens – maybe hundreds – of small fireworks shows, all going off simultaneously, all around us, highlighting in glittering silver the edges of the small island, located just 17 miles north of Venezuela.

And it was unlike any other New Year's Eve I had experienced. Something I'd only gotten in Aruba. Some New Year's Eve memories sneak up on you. Aruba taught me to remain open to the possibility of last-minute New Year's surprises. The night's still young."□

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DeRozan scores 26 as Raptors beat Pacers 95-82

The Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — DeMar DeRozan scored 26 points and Kyle Lowry had 13 points and a season-high 14 assists as the Toronto Raptors extended their season-best winning streak to four games by beating the Indiana Pacers 95-82 in the NBA on Wednesday.

NBA Capsules Terrence Ross scored 18 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 13 points and nine rebounds as the Raptors (15-15) ended Indiana's five-game winning streak and improved their record to .500 after 30 games for the first time since Jan. 6, 2010.

The Raptors have won eight of 10 games since Dec. 13, when the majority of the players acquired from Sacramento in the Rudy Gay deal made their Toronto debuts.

Roy Hibbert fouled out with 16 points and Paul George had 12 for the Pacers, who recorded a season-worst 23 turnovers. Indiana had won nine of its previous 12 meetings with Toronto, including four straight in Canada. Danny Granger scored 11 points for Indiana.

CLIPPERS 112, BOBCATS 85

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Blake Griffin scored 13 of his 31 points in the final 7:05 and Jared Dudley got 11 of his 20 points in the third quarter, leading the Clippers to



victory over the Bobcats.

Dudley faced his second former team in two games, making seven of 10 shots against the club that selected him with their first pick in the 2007 NBA draft and traded him to Phoenix after one season. He had nine points against the Suns on Monday in the Clippers' 107-88 loss.

Chris Paul had 17 points and 14 assists for the Clippers, who beat the Bobcats for the sixth straight time and sent them to their 17th straight road loss against Western Conference opponents.

Al Jefferson and Kemba Walker each scored 14 points for the Bobcats, whose previous six losses all were decided by five points or fewer.

76ERS 114, NUGGETS 102

DENVER (AP) — Evan Turner scored 23 points and Thaddeus Young added 17, helping the 76ers beat the slumping Nuggets.

The Sixers had seven different players score in double figures en route to their second straight win away from home.

Continued on Page 21

Toronto Raptors' DeMar DeRozan, left, shoots on Indiana Pacers' Paul George during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Toronto on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014.

Associated Press



In this July 6, 2005 file photo, overall leader Lance Armstrong reacts on the podium after the fifth stage of the Tour de France cycling race between Chambord, western France, and Montargis, south of Paris.

Associated Press

Armstrong wants hearing in bonus money fight

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Lance Armstrong is still fighting a Texas company that wants to recoup about \$12 million in bonuses he was paid for winning the Tour de France while secretly using performance-enhancing drugs. Court documents filed in Dallas this week show Armstrong has asked a judge

to stop an arbitration panel from considering whether Dallas-based SCA Promotions should be able to recover its money. The company tried proving Armstrong used steroids and other drugs and doping methods back in 2005, but ultimately agreed to pay him in a 2006 settle-

ment. In a motion filed on Monday, Armstrong's attorneys say there's "no authority under Texas law" for arbitration. They've asked a judge for a hearing. Armstrong was stripped of his seven Tour de France victories and given a lifetime ban from sports in 2012. □

Leafs top Wings at snowy Winter Classsic

LARRY LAGE

AP Hockey Writer

ANN ARBOR, Michigan (AP) — Tyler Bozak scored the winning shootout goal and Jonathan Bernier made two saves in the heart-pounding final moments, lifting the Toronto Maple Leafs to a 3-2 victory over Detroit at the snowy Winter Classic in front of the largest crowd to watch a hockey game.

The announced attendance Wednesday of 105,591 surpassed the 104,173 who watched the University of Michigan and Michigan State University play a college hockey game in the same football stadium known as the Big House in Ann Arbor in 2010. The game began with the temperature at 13 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 10 Celsius) and a steady snow that didn't stop on a windy afternoon. It was the sixth installment in the Winter Classic series — an annual regular-season game between NHL clubs played outdoors.

Because of the weather, however, this one felt more like an event than an actual game.

Detroit captain Henrik



Toronto Maple Leafs center Tyler Bozak (42) skates back to the bench as Detroit Red Wings goalie Jimmy Howard (35) leaves the net after Bozak's game winning shot during a shootout in the Winter Classic outdoor NHL hockey game at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, Mich., Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014. Associated Press

Zetterberg appeared to have good chance in overtime with the puck in the Maple Leafs' end and defenseman Cody Franson on his left side. The horn, however, sounded to stop play at the 2:30 mark of the extra period so the teams could switch sides, ensuring both played into a 10 mph (16 kph) wind for an equal amount of time.

"I think I would have had a clear breakaway," Zetterberg said.

The game also was halted midway through the third period so that the teams could switch ends. In the shootout, skaters for both teams attempted shots with the wind in their face toward the same net — or end zone.

After skaters with shovels

cleared the snow from the ice, Pavel Datsyuk scored Detroit's only goal in the shootout and teammate Tomas Tatar was foiled on his team's third and final attempt because he couldn't control the puck on the snow-covered surface and didn't even get a shot off. "The conditions made it so some of the skill in the game was eliminated,"

Red Wings coach Mike Babcock said.

The struggling yet storied hockey franchises did their best to put on show in the snow.

"I don't know if you would call it a gem from a pace standpoint," Maple Leafs coach Randy Carlyle said. "There was a lot of snow and a lot of things to deal with." Joffrey Lupul, who might face discipline from the NHL for a cross-check that knocked Patrick Eaves out of the game in the first period, scored the first of two goals for the Maple Leafs in the shootout.

Bernier, with a knit hat over his helmet, made 41 saves — the most in an outdoor regular-season game.

In Wednesday's only other NHL game, the Tampa Bay Lightning got just its second win in Vancouver in the 21-year history of the club, beating the Canucks 4-2.

Valtteri Filppula had a goal and an assist for the Lightning, which also posted its fourth straight road win this season.

Tampa Bay's Ben Bishop made 28 saves for his 21st win of the season as the Lightning outshot the Canucks 33-30.



Spain's Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Ernests Gulbis of Latvia during their quarterfinal at the ATP Open Tennis tournament at the Khalifa Tennis Complex in Doha, Qatar, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. Associated Press

SANDRA HARWITT

Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Top-seeded Rafael Nadal was the only seed remaining at the Qatar Open after he beat seventh-seeded Ernests Gulbis 7-5, 6-4 in the quarterfinals on Thursday. Nadal is often tested by the

24th-ranked Gulbis but has yet to lose a match to the Latvian in seven played.

This match, which was delayed for two hours by rain, marked only the second time Nadal has beaten Gulbis in straight sets. The other time was also in Doha, in the 2011 quarter-

Nadal reaches Doha semis against qualifier

finals.

Nadal is set to play German qualifier Peter Gojowczyk. The 162nd-ranked Gojowczyk defeated fellow German qualifier Dustin Brown 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5) to reach his first career tour semifinal. The other semi will pit Florian Mayer of Germany against Gael Monfils of France. Mayer defeated Victor Hanesescu of Romania 6-4, 6-7 (8), 6-4, and Monfils took out Daniel Brands of Germany 6-2, 6-1.

Nadal finally broke Gulbis in the 11th game when the latter sent a drop shot wide. Nadal needed five set points to close out the first set in the next game.

Gulbis raced to 3-0 in the

second set but couldn't hold on to the advantage. He had three points for 4-1 but ended up losing serve. Nadal broke with a stunning backhand cross-court that creased the line in the seventh game to take a permanent lead. He closed the match with a breathtaking backhand volley winner.

"I'm happy to win against Ernests," Nadal said. "If you are not playing well it's very, very difficult. He's able to hit winners from every part on the court." Before this week, Gojowczyk had only one ATP tour-level match win, at the 2013 U.S. Open.

Gojowczyk was serving for

the match against Brown at 5-3, 40-30 in the third set but netted a forehand to drop his serve. From 5-5 in the tiebreaker, Gojowczyk won the final two points.

"I'm so happy to be in the semifinals, it's an unbelievably good feeling," Gojowczyk said. "2014 is beginning great for me."



Bears sign quarterback Jay Cutler to 7-year deal

GENE CHAMBERLAIN

Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Illinois (AP) —

The Chicago Bears signed Jay Cutler to a seven-year contract on Thursday, ending speculation they might make a change after five seasons of good and bad from their talented quarterback.

Cutler clearly thrived under first-year coach Marc Trestman and now has some of the best complements on offense he's had since arriving in Chicago in 2009.

"It's not always been easy," Cutler said. "There's been some bad years there's been some good years. I think it makes me appreciate the moment I'm in even more, with the offensive weapons we have, with the type of leadership we have from the front office, with the type of coaching staff we have. It makes me happy I'm here."

The Bears also signed cornerback Tim Jennings, who has led the team in interceptions in each of the past two seasons, and guard Matt Slauson to four-year deals. Like Cutler, both players were scheduled to



Chicago Bears quarterback Jay Cutler (6) walks off the field after the Bears' 33-28 loss to the Green Bay Packers in an NFL football game on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in Chicago.

Associated Press

become free agents.

General manager Phil Emery said the team and Cutler's agent, Bus Cook, completed contract discussions three days after the season ended on Sunday with a 33-28 loss to the Green Bay Packers in a game that decided the NFC North title. Terms were not disclosed, but the deal for the 30-year-old Cutler is reportedly worth nearly \$18 million per year over the first three years and includes at least \$50 million guaranteed.

Cutler played in just 11

games due to ankle and groin injuries. He completed 224 of 355 passes for 2,621 yards and 19 touchdowns with 12 interceptions.

Emery said he was sold on Cutler's return after seeing him in Trestman's offense early in the season. Still, Emery said he wanted to see how Cutler responded to some adversity. He saw it when Cutler came back from a groin strain to face the Detroit Lions in a 21-19 loss and from an ankle sprain to beat the Cleveland Browns 38-31.

Cutler feuded with former offensive coordinators like Ron Turner, Mike Martz and Mike Tice, but he has steadily climbed the franchise statistical charts and guided the Bears to the NFC Championship game in 2010.

Under Trestman, he seemed to gain a new lease on life.

"The mindset is right and the talent in the locker room is right, so I'm happy to be joining the rest of the guys, the rest of the coaches, the rest of the organization in pursuit of a championship," Cutler said.

Cutler wouldn't call money the key reason for staying out of free agency, citing familiarity with Trestman's offense as a big factor. He has only been in the same offense for consecutive

years a few times in his NFL career, which started in 2006.

Trestman found Cutler ran his offense efficiently, even if he had a reputation as a big-play, big-mistake type of player.

"He's been through a lot," Trestman said. "I mean, part of what's brought him to this point is the scars of the last five years and the adversity that he's gone through in getting to know himself better over the last five years.

I saw selflessness. I certainly saw mental toughness. When you evaluate a quarterback, you say, does he have an inventory of passes? Can he make all the throws? Does he have mobility? Is he a quick decision-maker? Jay has all that."

O'Brien leaves Penn State for NFL's Texans



In this April 20, 2013, file photo, Penn State coach Bill O'Brien answers questions during a news conference in State College, Pa.

Associated Press

DAN GELSTON

AP Sports Writer Bill O'Brien left Penn State less than two years after replacing Joe Paterno to return to the NFL to coach the Houston Texans, the team with the league's worst record this season.

O'Brien will become the third coach in Texans history, following Dom Capers, who led the team from its expansion season in 2002, and Gary Kubiak. Houston made the official announcement on Thursday. "In your lifetime, you only get certain opportunities so

many times," O'Brien said at a Houston airport. "This is a great opportunity to work with an owner like Mr. (Bob) McNair and an organization like the Texans. It is a very exciting time for myself and my family."

O'Brien was proud of his time at Penn State.

"They gave me my first opportunity to be a head coach, and I'll always thank them for that," he said.

"They're great kids at Penn State; lot of great people there."

NFL honors Colts' Mathis with Deacon Jones Award

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indianapolis Colts linebacker Robert Mathis is the inaugural winner of the NFL's Deacon Jones Award.

The honor, which goes to the NFL sacks champion, was announced on Thursday.

The perennial Pro Bowler set a franchise single-season record with 19½ sacks, giving him half a sack more than St. Louis' Robert Quinn.

Mathis also surpassed Dwight Freeney's franchise record for career sacks. Freeney finished his Colts career with 107½ sacks. Mathis has 111.

Jones, a Hall of Famer, died on June 3 at age 74. Mathis calls Jones the "creator" of the sack.



Jacksonville Jaguars' Chad Henne (7) is tackled by Indianapolis Colts' Robert Mathis (98) and Bjoern Werner (92) on a third down play during the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in Indianapolis. The Jaguars did not get the first down on the play.

Associated Press

Ravens' LB Ray Lewis to retire after playoffs

DAVID GINSBURG

AP Sports Writer

OWINGS MILLS, Maryland

(AP) — Ray Lewis spent 17

seasons deftly patrolling

the middle of the football

field and serving as an

inspirational leader for the

Baltimore Ravens. Now

he's poised and eager to

become a full-time dad.

Lewis announced

Wednesday that he will

end his brilliant NFL career

after the Ravens complete

their 2013 playoff run.

Lewis has been sidelined

since Oct. 14 with a torn

right triceps.

The 13-time Pro Bowl

middle linebacker intends

to return Sunday to face

the Indianapolis Colts in

what will almost certainly

be his final home game.

"Everything that starts has

an end," Lewis said. "For

me, today, I told my team

that this will be my last ride."

Lewis will walk away from

the game because he

wants to spend more time

with his sons. While working

to return from his injury,

Lewis watched two of his

boys play on the same high

school football team. He

intends to see Ray Lewis

III perform as a freshman

next year for the University

of Miami, where the elder

Lewis starred before the

Ravens selected him in the

first round of the 1996 NFL

draft.

"God is calling," the

37-year-old Lewis said.

"My children have made

the ultimate sacrifice for

their father for 17 years. I

don't want to see them

do that no more. I've

done what I wanted to do

in this business, and now

it's my turn to give them

something back."

That's why Lewis will pull off

his No. 52 uniform for the

last time after the Ravens

lose or claim their second

Super Bowl title.

"It's either (that or) hold

onto the game and keep

playing and let my kids miss

out on times we can be

spending together," Lewis

said. "Because I always

promised my son if he got

a full ride on scholarship

Daddy is going to be there.

I can't miss that."

Lewis was the AP Defensive

Player of the Year in 2000,

the same season he was

voted the Most Valuable

Player in the Super Bowl

following Baltimore's 34-7

rout of the New York Giants.

Lewis was also Defensive

Player of the Year in 2003,

and is the only player in

NFL history with at least

40 career sacks and 30

interceptions.

"I never played the game

for individual stats. I only

played the game to make

my team a better team,"

he said.

Lewis has been with the

Ravens since they moved

from Cleveland. After

being selected 26th overall

in Baltimore's first NFL draft,

Lewis became a fixture at

middle linebacker — and a

beloved figure in Baltimore.

He remained that way

even after his alleged

involvement in a double-

murder in Atlanta in early

2000.

In June of that year, a

judge approved a deal

allowing Lewis to avoid

murder charges and jail

time by pleading guilty

to a misdemeanor and

testifying against two co-

defendants. Within a year,

Lewis was in the Super Bowl,

leading the Ravens to their

only NFL championship.

The news of his decision

quickly resounded around

the rest of the NFL.

Colts coach Chuck

Pagano, who served

as Lewis' defensive

coordinator last year, said,

"I thought, shoot, the guy

could play forever and

would play forever. Great

person, great man, great

player, just an unbelievable

human being — what he's

done for that organization,

that city and for that

matter, so many people.

He's obviously a first-ballot

Hall of Famer and will be

sorely missed." □

NBA Capsules

home last season.

MAVERICKS 87, WIZARDS 78

WASHINGTON (AP) — Monta

Ellis scored 23 points and

Vince Carter had 13 as the

Mavericks held the Wizards

scoreless for more than four

minutes late in the fourth

quarter.

The Wizards led 74-70 with

4:58 to play, but the Mav-

ericks scored nine straight

points on a 3-pointer by

Carter, a hook shoot by

Brandan Wright, two free

throws by Carter and a

jumper by Ellis.

Washington didn't score

again until John Wall,

who led the Wizards with

22 points, made two free

throws with 46 seconds to

play. Trevor Booker had 10

points and a career-high

19 rebounds for Washing-

ton. It was Dallas' fourth

straight win on the road

and their eighth straight

over the Wizards (14-15),

who failed in their attempt

to rise above .500 for the

first time since Oct. 31,

2009.

In other NBA games it was

Dallas 87, Washington 78;

Toronto 95, Indiana 82; Min-

nesota 124, New Orleans

112; Philadelphia 114, Den-

ver 102; and L.A. Clippers

112, Charlotte 85. □



In this Dec. 18, 2011, file photo, Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis peers over the line of scrimmage during the first half of a NFL football game against the San Diego Chargers in San Diego.

Associated Press

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JANUARY 2 - 8

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PARANORMAL ACTIVITY
THE MARKED ONES

MON - THURS 5:10 | 7:25 | 9:40
FRI - 5:10 | 7:25 | 9:40 | 11:55
SAT 2:55 | 5:10 | 7:25 | 9:40 | 11:55
SUN & HOL 2:55 | 5:10 | 7:25 | 9:40

SYLVESTER STALLONE | ROBERT DE NIRO

GRUDGE MATCH

MON - THURS 4:35 | 7:05 | 9:35
FRI - 4:35 | 7:05 | 9:35 | 12:05
SAT 2:10 | 4:35 | 7:05 | 9:35 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 2:10 | 4:35 | 7:05 | 9:35

BEN STILLER | KRISTEN WILLO

THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY

MON - FRI 4:20 | 6:50
SAT, SUN & HOL 1:35 | 4:20 | 6:50

MARK WAHLBERG | TAYLOR KITSCH

LONE SURVIVOR

MON - THURS 9:20
FRI - SAT 9:20 | 12:00
SUN & HOL 9:20

KEANU REEVES | HIROYUKI SANADA

47 RONIN

3D VERSION

MON - THURS 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30
FRI - 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30 | 12:05
SAT 1:50 | 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:20 | 6:55 | 9:30

KRISTEN BELL | IDINA MENZEL

FROZEN

3D VERSION

MON - THURS 4:00 | 5:05 | 6:20 | 7:30 | 8:45
FRI 4:00 | 5:05 | 6:20 | 7:30 | 8:45 | 9:55 | 11:10
SAT 1:55 | 2:40 | 4:00 | 5:05 | 6:20 | 7:30 | 8:45 | 9:55 | 11:10
SUN & HOL 1:55 | 2:40 | 4:00 | 5:05 | 6:20 | 7:30 | 8:45

WILL FERRELL | PAUL RUDD

ANCHORMAN 2
THE LEGEND CONTINUES

MON - THURS 4:00 | 6:35 | 9:10
FRI - SAT 4:00 | 6:35 | 9:10 | 11:45
SUN & HOL 4:00 | 6:35 | 9:10

MARTIN FREEMAN | IAN MCKELLEN

THE HOBBIT
THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG

MON - THURS 5:25 | 8:45
FRI 5:25 | 8:45
SAT 2:05 | 5:25 | 8:45
SUN & HOL 2:05 | 5:25 | 8:45

STARTING NEXT WEEK JANUARY 9 | SAVING MR. BANKS

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Continued from Page 18

Philadelphia halted a 13-

game road losing streak

in Los Angeles against the

Lakers over the weekend.

J.J. Hickson had 19 points

and 11 rebounds for the

Nuggets, who dropped

their eighth game in a row.

It's the team's longest skid

since losing the final eight

games of the 2002-03 sea-

son. Denver also has lost

some of its home-court

mystique under first-year

coach Brian Shaw, losing

a fifth straight at the Pepsi

Center. The Nuggets were

a franchise-best 38-3 at

Williams, Sharapova to meet in Brisbane semifinals

JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

BRISBANE, Australia (AP)

— Serena Williams and Maria Sharapova are set to renew their long and not-so-friendly rivalry in the semifinals at the Brisbane International, a key warm-up tournament for the Australian Open.

The pair played back-to-back quarterfinals on center court Thursday, with the third-seeded Sharapova beating 2012 Brisbane champion Kaia Kanepi of Estonia 4-6, 6-3, 6-2. She dropped three service games in the first set and another to open the second before finding her range and staging her comeback against the No. 30-ranked Kanepi.

The top-ranked Williams, the defending champion, was next on court and didn't lose a point on serve in the first set en route to a 6-3, 6-3 win over ninth-seeded Diminika Cibulkova of Slovakia.

Williams has a 14-2 record and 13-match winning streak against Sharapova dating back to the 2005 Australian Open semifinals, beating the Russian most recently in last year's French Open final.

Any friendship the pair had at that stage soured when they traded personal barbs relating to their romantic relationships

ahead of Wimbledon, where Sharapova made an early exit. Sharapova only played one match after that in 2013 and spent the latter months of the season recovering from a right shoulder problem.

Williams, meanwhile, had a spectacular year, winning 78 of her 82 matches and capturing 11 titles, including two majors.

As far as any grudges go, Williams said Thursday: "It's very difficult I think for anyone to be best buddies when you're so competitive."

Sharapova didn't back away from the comments she made about Williams at Wimbledon in a New York Times profile last month, giving the impression that the relationship between the pair was still cold. On Thursday, she said she'd used the newspaper interview to "clear the air." Asked how she'd describe their rivalry now, Sharapova replied: "Well, I think I got to win a few times in order to call it rivalry."

"I haven't had a lot of success against her," she added. "It's the first tournament of the year. I came here wanting to play as many matches as I could and obviously wanting to play the best."

Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka had difficulty closing out her quar-



Serena Williams of the U.S. plays a shot in her quarter final match against Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia during the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

Associated Press

terfinal match before beating Stefanie Voegele 6-4, 6-7 (7), 6-1.

The second-seeded Azarenka failed to convert eight match points in the second set — three serving at 5-4 and another five in the tiebreaker — before Voegele rallied to force a third. Azarenka raced to a 4-0 lead in the deciding set, dropped serve and then finally finished it off on her 10th match point.

"Yeah, I made it ... about 20 times harder than it should have been," Azarenka said. "I definitely

should have closed it out a little earlier."

Azarenka will next face fourth-seeded Jelena Jankovic, who beat fifth-seeded Angelique Kerber of Germany 6-7 (8), 6-3, 6-1. In men's second-round matches, Romanian qualifier Marius Copil beat third-seeded Gilles Simon 7-5, 6-3 and will next meet former No. 1-ranked Lleyton Hewitt, who ousted No. 6-seeded Feliciano Lopez 7-5, 6-3.

No. 8-seeded Jeremy Chardy beat Nicolas Mahut 7-5, 6-7 (4), 6-3 and

fourth-seeded Kevin Anderson withdrew due to a stomach ailment before his scheduled second-round match against Australian wildcard entry Sam Groth. In other Australasian tournaments, Milos Raonic and Eugenie Bouchard combined to give Canada a 3-0 win over Italy at the Hopman Cup in Perth, and Venus Williams and Ana Ivanovic progressed to the semifinals at the WTA Tour's ASB Classic in Auckland, New Zealand.

Canada (2-1) maintained a chance of qualifying for Saturday's Hopman Cup final from Group A when Raonic beat Andreas Seppi 6-2, 6-4 and Bouchard clinched it when Flavia Pennetta retired with a right wrist injury while trailing 4-0 in the first set.

Poland also won, beating Australia 2-1.

In Auckland, Venus Williams beat Garbine Muguruza of Spain 6-3, 6-3 and the second-seeded Ivanovic beat Kurumi Nara of Japan 6-2, 6-3.

Ivanovic will play her doubles partner, third-seeded Kirsten Flipkens of Belgium, in Friday's semifinals while Williams will play Jamie Hampton.

Flipkens beat Japanese qualifier Sachie Ishizu 6-4, 7-5 and the fifth-seeded Hampton beat Lauren Davis 6-2, 4-6, 6-4. □

Scott edges Woods for GWAA player of the year

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)

Masters champion Adam Scott narrowly beat Tiger Woods as the male player of the year in voting by the Golf Writers Association of America on Thursday.

The GWAA takes into account more than just a player's performance on the U.S. PGA Tour. Scott won four times around the world, none bigger than his playoff victory at Augusta National to become the first Australian in a green jacket. He also won a FedEx Cup playoff event and twice in Australia, and he



In this March 14, 2011, file photo, Adam Scott, left, of Australia, chats with Tiger Woods while walking on the ninth fairway during the first day of the Tavistock Cup golf tournament in Windermere, Fla. Associated Press

joined Jason Day to win the portion of the World Cup for Australia at Royal

Melbourne.

Out of 218 ballots, Scott won by five votes.

"It is an honor to be recognized as the most consistent male golfer of 2013 and it is appreciated to have the respect of the Golf Writers of America. Thank you," Scott said from Kapalua, where he's playing in the Hyundai Tournament of Champions.

Woods won five times on the U.S. tour, including The Players Championship and two World Golf Championships, though he went a fifth straight year without winning a major. Woods also won the tour money title and the Vardon Trophy for the lowest scoring average. Woods won player of

the year from the U.S. PGA Tour (a vote of players) and PGA of America (based on points). Those awards consider only a player's tour record. The tour does not disclose vote totals.

Scott received 75 votes, or 34 percent of the vote, compared with 70 votes for Woods. In a season that had so many players accomplish so much, Phil Mickelson received 17 percent, while Henrik Stenson got 16 percent. Mickelson won the British Open for the third leg of the Grand Slam, along with the Phoenix Open and the Scottish Open. □

Snapchat suffers security breach

BARBARA ORTUTAY

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Snapchat, the disappearing-message service popular with young people, has been quiet following a security breach that allowed hackers to collect the usernames and phone numbers of millions of its users. Company spokeswoman Mary Ritti said Thursday morning that the company is assessing the situation, but did not have further comment.

As Americans rang in the New Year, hackers reportedly published 4.6 million Snapchat usernames and phone numbers on a website called snapchatdb.info, which has since been suspended. The breach came less than a week after security experts alerted Snapchat of a vulnerability in its system and warned that an attack could take place.

In response to the warning, Snapchat said in a blog post last Friday that it had implemented "various safeguards" over the past year that would make it more difficult to steal large sets of phone numbers. But the measures appear to have fallen short.

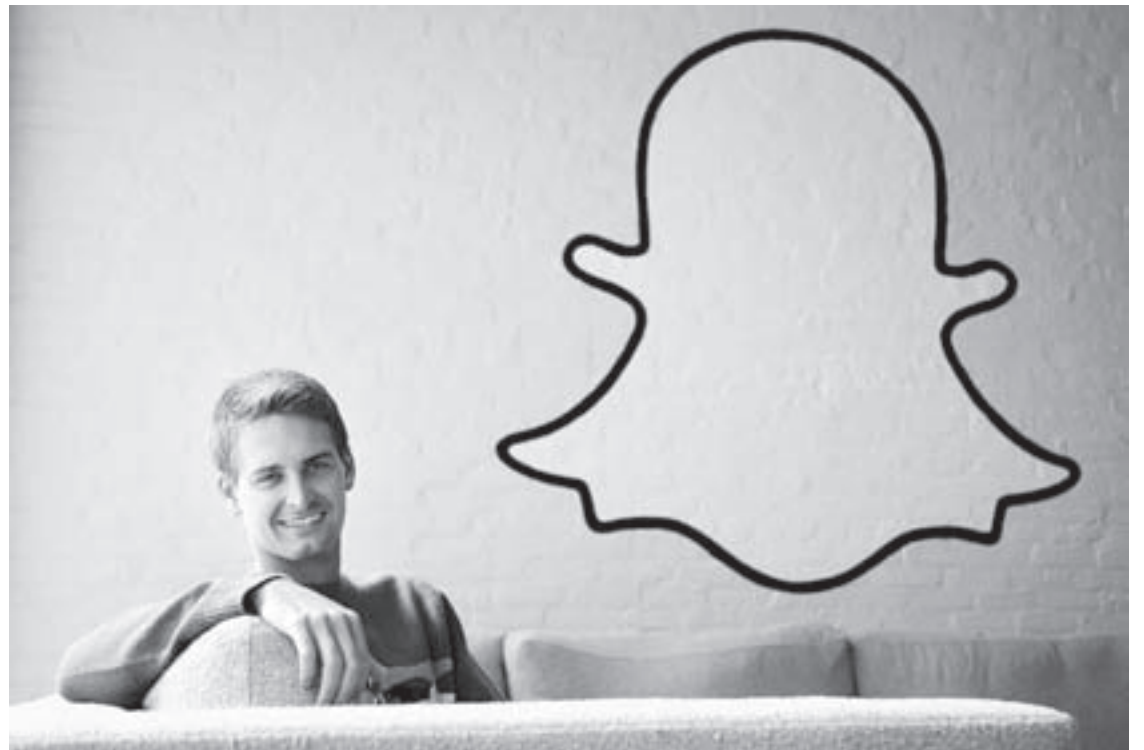
The incident bruises the image of a young company that reportedly turned

down a \$3 billion buyout offer from Facebook last year. According to the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, 9 percent of U.S. cell phone owners use Snapchat, which amounts to roughly 20 million adults, based on 2012 census data. The Pew study didn't include users under 18, a demographic with which Snapchat is especially popular. The Los Angeles-based company, which has no source of revenue, has not disclosed its own user figures.

What should users do? Gibson Security, the firm that warned Snapchat of the security vulnerability on Dec. 25, has created a site, — <http://lookup.gibsonsec.org/> — that lets users type in their username to see if their phone number was among those leaked. Of two user accounts that The Associated Press checked, one was found to have been compromised.

Gibson Security did not publish the last two digits of the phone numbers.

Gibson says users can delete their Snapchat account if they wish, but "this won't remove your phone number from the already circulating leaked database." Users can also ask their phone company to give them a new phone



In this Thursday, Oct. 24, 2013, Snapchat CEO Evan Spiegel poses for photos, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

number.

"Lastly, ensure that your security settings are up to scratch on your social media profiles.

Be careful about what data you give away to sites when you sign up — if you don't think a service requires your phone number, don't give it to them," Gibson said.

This was Gibson's second warning to Snapchat, following one in August that the security firm said was ignored.

"Given that it's been around four months since our last Snapchat release, we figured we'd do a refresher on the latest version, and see which of the released exploits had been

fixed (full disclosure: none of them)," Gibson wrote on the Gibson Security website.

The Snapchat breach comes just two weeks after Target was hit with a massive data security breach that affected as many as 40 million debit and credit card holders. Gartner security analyst Avivah Litan, said phone numbers are not considered "sensitive" personally identifiable information — such as credit card or social security numbers — so they are collected by all sorts of companies to verify a person's identity. A phone number is "not as bad as password or magnetic strip information, but it's the piece of the puzzle

that criminals need to impersonate identities," she said.

Regarding Snapchat's response to the warnings, however, Litan added that it "doesn't seem that responsible to be so nonchalant about it."

Christopher Soghoian, principal technologist with the American Civil Liberties Union, agreed.

"The main problem was that they ignored a responsible report by security researchers," he said, adding that his concern is not with the specific database of information that was released, but that Snapchat has "demonstrated a cavalier attitude about privacy and security."

Ford to unveil solar hybrid concept car at CES

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Ford plans to unveil at this month's International CES gadget show a solar-powered concept car that offers the same performance as a plug-in hybrid but without the need for a plug.

The C-MAX Solar Energi Concept car uses a gasoline engine combined with a gizmo that acts like a magnifying glass to concentrate the sun's rays on the vehicle's roof-mounted solar panels. The automaker says the vehicle's estimated combined city-

highway mileage is 100 miles (160 kilometers) per gallon.

The U.S. auto maker says that by using solar power instead of an electric plug, a typical owner will reduce their annual greenhouse gas emissions by four metric tons.

The company says it sold about 85,000 hybrid or electric vehicles in 2013, including 6,300 units of its C-MAX Energi plug-in hybrid.

The sun-ray concentrator was developed by researchers at the Georgia

Institute of Technology and uses what is known as a Fresnel lens, which concentrates light but can be made thinner than a conventional lens. A full day of sunshine is equivalent to a four-hour battery charge, or 8 kilowatts, Ford says.

On a full charge, it should have a range of 620 miles (997 kilometers), the same as the C-MAX Energi. The concept car also comes with a plug-in port for standard electric charging.

Ford says that 75 percent of all trips made by an aver-



This undated image provided by Ford shows the C-MAX Solar Energi Concept car.

Associated Press

age driver could be powered by the sun.

After showing off the concept car at the convention in Las Vegas Jan. 7-10, Ford

Motor Co. says that it will test the vehicle with institute researchers to determine if it's feasible for mass production.

After year of stock records, a weak start to 2014



Booz Allen Hamilton Chairman and CEO Ralph Shrader, center, and guests attend the opening bell ceremony at the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. The defense contractor provides management, technology, and engineering services to the U.S. government's defense and intelligence agencies. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Investors may already feel a little nostalgic for 2013. The Standard & Poor's 500 index began the New Year

with its worst performance in three weeks as energy and technology companies pulled down the stock market.

Stocks started the year at lofty heights after a com-

bination of rising company earnings and economic stimulus from the Federal Reserve pushed major indexes to record levels in 2013. The S&P 500 surged almost 30 percent, its best

year since 1997, and the Dow Jones industrial average climbed 26.5 percent, the most since 1995.

"The market was grossly overbought and needed to pull back," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Rockwell Global Capital. "But fundamentally everything is looking pretty good."

The S&P 500 dropped 16.38 points, or 0.9 percent, to 1,831.98, its worst start to a year's trading since Jan. 2, 2008, when the index slumped 1.4 percent.

The Dow fell 135.31 points, or 0.8 percent, to 16,441.35. The Nasdaq composite slid 33.52 points, or 0.8 percent, to 4,143.07.

Energy stocks fell as the price of oil dropped \$2.98, or 3 percent, to \$95.44 a barrel. Oil slumped after reports that an end to protests at a major Libyan oil field could return 300,000 barrels of daily production to the global market.

Technology stocks lost

ground after analysts published gloomy notes on companies in the sector. Analog Devices lost \$1.65, or 3.2 percent, to \$49.28 after analysts at Goldman Sachs advised its clients to sell the chipmaker's stock, saying it's overvalued compared to its peers.

Apple fell \$7.89, or 1.4 percent, to \$553.13, after Wells Fargo cut its outlook on the stock to "market perform" from "outperform," saying profit margins may come under pressure later this year.

Some analysts said investors shouldn't read too much into the lackluster start to the year because trading volumes were below normal as the holiday season wound down with many market participants still away from their desks.

"I don't think we can really start counting till Monday," said Dan Morris, Global Investment Strategist at TIAA-CREF. "A lot of people are still on holiday." □

US manufacturing expands at solid pace in December



Employees at Sheffield Platers Inc. work on the factory floor in San Diego. The Institute for Supply Management issued its U.S. manufacturing index for December on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014, which showed a healthy pace of growth. (AP Photo/Lenny Ignelzi)

C. S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. manufacturing grew at a healthy pace in December as factories stepped up hiring and received more orders. The expansion suggests solid growth at the end of the year. The Institute for Supply

Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, said Thursday that its index of manufacturing activity slipped to 57 from 57.3 in November. But that's still the second-highest reading in the past 2 1/2 years. And any reading above 50 signals growth. A measure of new orders

rose to the highest level since April 2010. And a gauge of hiring increased to its highest level since June 2011. Production and a measure of manufacturers' stockpiles fell.

"It is clear that growth remained strong at the end of last year and this should continue into 2014," said

Paul Dales, an economist at Capital Economics.

Overseas demand is growing, but at a much slower rate, the survey found. A gauge of export orders fell to 55 from 59.5.

And a separate report this week showed factories in China expanded in December but at a slower pace than the previous month.

Still, the small decline in the U.S. survey doesn't dampen the outlook for American factories. The manufacturing index had increased for six straight months through November.

Americans are buying more cars and homes, both of which fuel factory output. Many homebuyers also purchase furniture, appliances and electronics. And companies are stepping up spending on large machinery and other equipment after holding back in the fall.

Other snapshots of manufacturing have also been healthy. Factory output rose in November for the fourth straight month, ac-

cording to the Federal Reserve. A big increase in auto production fueled the gain.

Auto sales reached the highest level in nearly seven years in November. Car makers will report December figures on Friday.

Demand for long-lasting goods jumped in November, the government said last week, evidence that businesses are investing in facilities and equipment. That should help lift economic growth in the October-December quarter.

The improving trends have led manufacturers to step up hiring, creating more higher-paying jobs. Factories have added jobs for four straight months. In November, they hired 27,000 new workers, the most in 20 months.

Companies rapidly increased their stockpiles of goods in the July-September quarter, one reason factories have boosted output. That helped push economic growth to an annual rate of 4.1 percent, the best in nearly two years. □

US house prices rise again, but the pace could slow

ANNIE LOWREY

© 2014 New York Times

WASHINGTON - It was a great year for the stock market. And it was also a pretty good year for many people's biggest investment: their homes.

In 2013's last glimpse at the housing market, figures released this week show that home prices in major metro areas kept rising in October. Year-over-year, prices were up 13.6 percent, the biggest gain in seven years.

After plummeting during the housing bust, prices have increased steadily since the spring of 2012. But while prices in 20 major American metro areas increased 0.2 percent in October, without seasonal adjustment, the quick rebound in prices is slowing, according to the closely watched S&P/Case-Shiller data. Higher mortgage rates might slow the pace of improvement going forward, analysts say.

Nationally, the increase in home prices has moderated, the S&P/Case-Shiller analysis said. Prices decreased in nine metro areas between September and October, including Denver, Chicago and Washington, whereas just one saw price decreases between August and September.

"Monthly numbers show we are living on borrowed time and the boom is fading," said David M. Blitzer of S&P Dow Jones Indices in an analysis of the new housing numbers. A big question, he said, is how quickly the Federal Reserve pulls back from its extraordinary efforts to keep rates low.

"The key economic question facing housing is the Fed's future course to scale back quantitative easing and how this will affect mortgage rates," Blitzer said. "Other housing data paint a mixed picture suggesting that we may be close to the peak gains in prices." He added: "Most forecasts for home prices point to single-digit growth in 2014." □

Fiat stock soars on Chrysler deal; unions worry

FRANCES D'EMILIO

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Shares in Fiat soared on Thursday on the news the Italian automaker will take full ownership of Chrysler, but some Italian unions worried what the deal will mean for jobs and

percent on the Milan exchange. The stock was up by as much as 15.8 percent earlier in the day.

Fiat will buy a 41.5 percent stake held by a United Auto Workers union trust fund for \$1.75 billion (about 1.35 billion euros) in cash and an-

called the deal one of life's "defining moments that go down in the history books." The move was greeted in Italy, where Fiat is the largest private employer, with a mixture of anxiety and excitement.

Italian unions have long

their concerns.

"It is indispensable that Fiat say what it intends to do in our country," Susanna Camusso, leader of the nationwide, left-leaning CGIL labor confederation, said in a statement.

Fiat has a total of 215,000 employees, almost a third of which are in Italy.

While praising the deal as important for Fiat to keep up with rivals, Camusso insisted that the company's "strategic direction and planning remain Italian" and that it "keep a significant presence in Italy."

Allied with CGIL is the Fiom metalworker's union, which has a reputation as a hard-liner in labor negotiations.

"We contend that the acquisition of the remaining capital shares of Chrysler group was possible thanks to the maximizing of industrial capital and of human capital of the workers of Fiat Group in Italy," said Michele De Palma, in charge of Fiom at the automaker.

"Before celebrating, we contend it is fundamental to understand the deal's terms," De Palma said in a written statement.

The union leader said he will ask the premier's office to summon all sides to talks about the future of the Italian plants. The government is struggling to revive the economy, which is mired in recession and plagued by unemployment. □



Rain falls on a Fiat logo pictured on a car in Milan, Italy, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. Italian automaker Fiat SpA announced that it reached an agreement to acquire the remaining shares of Chrysler for \$3.65 billion in payments to a union-controlled trust fund. Fiat already owns 58.5 percent of Chrysler's shares, with the remaining 41.5 percent held by a United Auto Workers union trust fund that pays health care bills for retirees.

(AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

investments in the country. In a New Year's day announcement, Fiat SpA said it could complete its acquisition of Chrysler without having to raise new capital through a rights issue. Investors cheered the fact, bidding the shares up 12

other \$1.9 billion in extraordinary dividends. The deal is due to close by Jan. 20.

The agreement caps the dream of Sergio Marchionne, Fiat's chief executive and CEO of Chrysler Group, to run a truly global automaker. Marchionne

fretted that the global reach of Fiat could come at their expense in terms of production, job security and contract conditions. Their leaders immediately pressed for guarantees, appealing to the government to help safeguard

Macau casinos hit jackpot with \$45B in revenue

HONG KONG (AP) — The tiny Chinese city of Macau has again smashed its annual record for casino earnings as revenues last year hit a staggering \$45 billion, further underlining its position as the world's biggest gambling market.

Macau's nearly three dozen casinos raked in 33.5 billion patacas (\$4.2 billion) in December, according to data released Thursday by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, the gambling regulator. That brought revenue for 2013 to 360.8 billion patacas (\$45 billion), up 18.6 percent from 2012.

Analyst Grant Goversen of Union Gaming Research estimated that Macau's take would be more than seven times the amount earned on the Las Vegas Strip.

The former Portuguese colony's once-lethargic casino market has thrived since the government ended a gambling monopoly a decade ago and let in foreign players such as Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Wynn Resorts Ltd.

The ensuing competition has transformed the tiny enclave into a gambling powerhouse, with glitzy new casino resorts centered on the Cotai Strip,

marketed as Asia's version of the Las Vegas Strip.

All six casino operators in Macau, an hour by high-speed ferry from Hong Kong, are pouring billions of dollars into new megaprojects in the district in a fresh round of expansion.

Macau's casino revenues are the envy of other markets around Asia, which have been looking at ways to duplicate the southern Chinese city's success.

Increasing numbers of wealthy high-rolling visitors from mainland China have helped power Macau's rise as a casino hub.

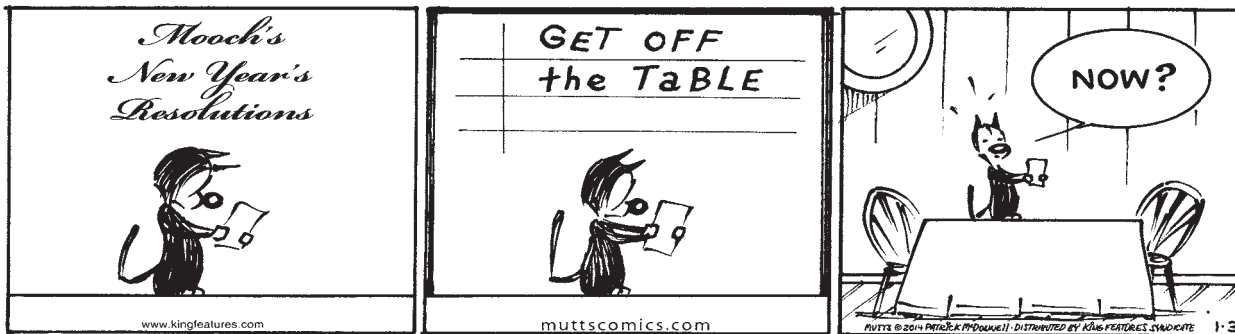
Revenue has already over-

taken the entire market in the U.S., where a year ago some 12,000 U.S. casinos raked in \$37.3 billion, according to figures from the American Gaming Association.

In the same period, Macau, which has 35 casinos and a population of about 560,000, earned \$38 billion, according to the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau.

Though comparable U.S. figures for 2013 are not yet available, Macau's lead is certain to widen as growth in major markets like the Las Vegas Strip has largely hit a plateau. □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



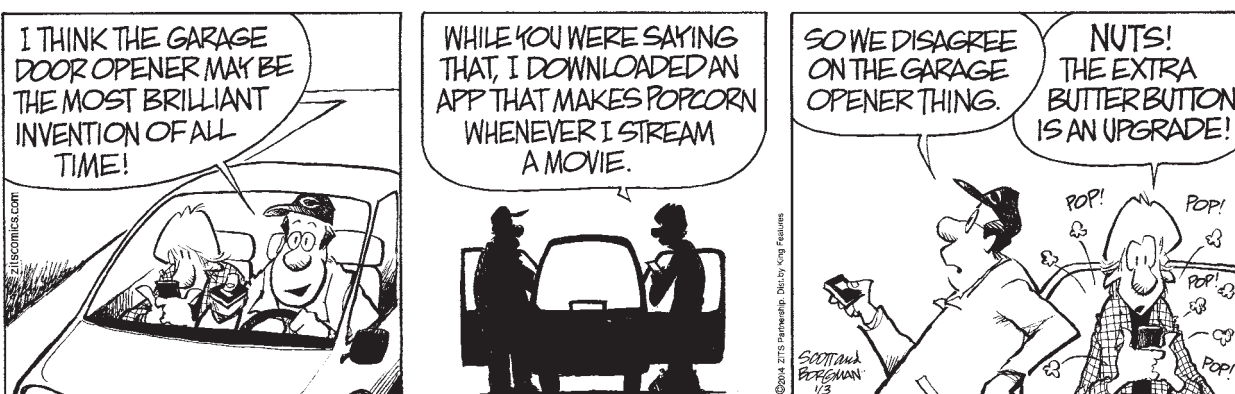
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	7					6		
3			9		2	7	4	
							9	5
	8			9			7	
			6		4			
	9			5			8	
5	1							
	4	6	5		9			3
		2					1	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

1/03

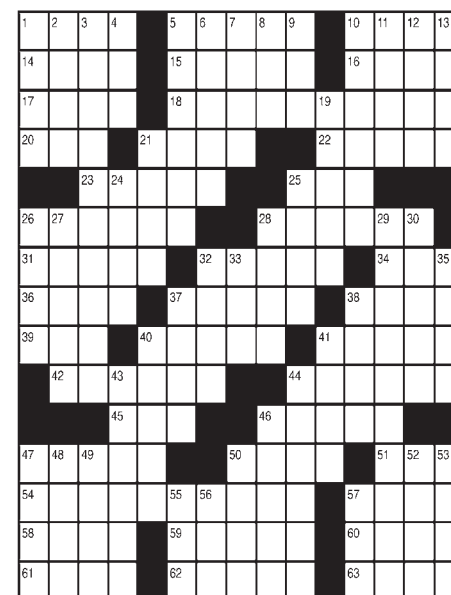
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

5	8	7	9	2	4	1	3	6
2	6	1	8	7	3	9	5	4
9	4	3	6	5	1	2	8	7
7	5	2	1	4	6	8	9	3
3	1	6	5	9	8	4	7	2
8	9	4	2	3	7	5	6	1
1	3	9	4	6	5	7	2	8
6	2	8	7	1	9	3	4	5
4	7	5	3	8	2	6	1	9

ACROSS

- Disease-causing microorganism
- Tiny European nation
- Pleased
- Hawaiian island
- Once more
- Cartoon bear
- Hat's edge
- Noisy brawl
- Hotel
- Lion's neck hair
- Stove
- Opponent
- Feline
- Take for granted
- Nativity scene figurine
- Game that is often state-run
- Entreaties
- "Van Winkle"
- ___ and cons
- Armada
- Sandwich shop
- Title for Marco Rubio: abbr.
- Hang limply
- Long gun
- Go over again
- Under ___; while being forced
- TV's "___ Got a Secret"
- Actor Lawford
- "Likewise!"
- Former Iranian leader's title
- Golfer Ernie ___
- Senseless
- Make a tiny cut
- "Groovy!" to today's kids
- Pay hike
- Pinnacle
- Discontinues
- Run ___; chase
- No longer here



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/3/14

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

ITS	STABS	ZETA
ROAM	THREE	OVEN
ERGO	ROMAN	DEAD
NARCISSUS	INKY	
SAKE	IRA	
ADHERE	IMBECILE	
ORALS	SCOLD	BIN
RAPS	SPICE	ISLE
TIP	PRANK	STEAM
ANYTHING	CHANCY	
OIL	TOOL	
YOGA	ADORATION	
EVES	NADIR	ANEW
LENT	KNOB	NEAR
PREY	AGREE	STY

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1/3/14

- Large colorful flower, for short
- Señora in Paris
- Terrible pain
- Walkway
- Can material
- ___ day now; pretty soon
- Whirl around
- Crazy as a ___
- Very eager
- Levee
- Orchestra section
- Short note
- Party treat
- Winter garment
- Mountain range in Europe
- More resentful
- Army vehicle
- First choice
- Beverly __, CA
- Farm vehicle
- Zodiac lion
- Eskimo __; ice cream treats
- On the house
- Urgent

DOWN

- Large Asian desert
- Make money
- Imitation gem

- Chunk of turf
- Babe ___ of baseball
- Blood pressure, pulse, etc.
- Card distributor
- ___ out; get rid of gradually
- Chop finely
- Common metal
- ___ on; trampled
- Peru's capital
- Drove too fast
- Lyricalist
- Gershwin
- Bumpkin
- Unhappy

A Cleaned-Up Hotel In Times Square

DAVID W. DUNLAP

© 2014 New York Times

NEW YORK - It isn't easy for hotels to stand out from their competitors. In 2006, however, the Hotel Carter, near Times Square, found a new way to do so when TripAdvisor readers named it the dirtiest hotel in America.

With No. 1 finishes again in 2008 and 2009, the Carter won a triple victory that is not likely to be equaled, since TripAdvisor no longer compiles a "dirtiest" list.

But the Carter would probably be out of the competition anyway. It has been under new management for eight months and will be offered for sale in 2014.

As a result of legal battles among the many survivors of Tran Dinh Truong, who owned the hotel from 1977 until his death in 2012, the Carter has been placed in the hands of a temporary administrator, Stanley Parness. He is a former presiding justice of the appellate term in state Supreme Court in Manhattan whose rulings 24 years ago cleared the way for the redevelopment of Times Square.

"Our direction from Judge Parness has been to focus on correcting all life-safety issues," said John J. Cruz of GF Management, who took over the Carter in April.

He said 15 outstanding building code violations were "in varying stages of being addressed."

What Cruz walked into was a \$99-a-night, 615-room mess.

Any hotel can have bedbugs. The Carter had insects that greeted guests in the lobby.

The hotel's cryptic motto - "You Wanted in Time Square & Less" - was the least of its problems, but it did suggest that things

were out of control.

Fire extinguishers had not been recharged since the 1970s, Cruz said. Exit signs were not illuminated. Elevators in the 24-story building broke down repeatedly and were overdue for maintenance and inspection. Discarded hospital linens were used on guests' beds. The housekeeping staff, working in street clothes, cleaned rooms every third day. On weekends, there were no doormen. Insurance coverage was insufficient, Parness said. Loans had not been repaid.

Progress has been made on all fronts, Cruz and Parness said. Occupancy has increased to 74 percent, from 68 percent. And on TripAdvisor's 1-to-100 customer satisfaction index, the Carter has increased to 73.6, from 67.6 in 2012.

Cruz and his colleagues have instituted modest cosmetic changes to make the place more comfortable and, not incidentally, to allow them to raise room rates, which are now typically \$120 to \$150.

Thirty rooms on the fourth floor have been inexpensively renovated with new Ikea furniture and framed artwork bought from sidewalk vendors.

"We offer value and a clean room," Cruz said. "We don't have expensive tiled floors, chandeliers and snooty bellmen."

And bedbugs? Cruz said that after any report of infestation, the mattress from that room was discarded and a new mattress was installed, wrapped in a protective cover. Pest controllers from Steritech come through weekly, he said.

Housekeeping is now done every other day, and the staff is in uniform.

"Whoever is going to buy it

doesn't care whether the staff is uniformed or not," Parness said. "But it's just the right thing to do. And it increases the income."

The need for a temporary administrator became evident as Tran's surviving family members fought one another for control of the estate, principally the Hotel Carter.

It is not entirely clear who Tran's survivors are. One paid death notice named a wife, Nguyen Kim Sang, and four children. Another paid death notice listed 16 children by name, "their mothers" and 15 grandchildren. Some relatives still live at the Carter. Some are employed by the hotel.

"Our expectation, when we sell the hotel, is that there will no longer be family members residing there," said Lawrence B. Wolfe, a senior managing director of Eastdil Secured, which will market the property.

Wolfe imagines the Carter as a three-star hotel, a bump up from two stars.

"My intuition is that positioning yourself as one of the less expensive hotels in a great location is where it's going," he said. □

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200451

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NOORD	587-0009
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SAVANETA	584-7000
SAN NICOLAS	584-5000
FIRE DEPT.	115
FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
HOSPITAL	527-4000
AMBULANCE	582-1234
SAN NICOLAS	
AMBULANCE	584-5050

PHARMACY

O'STAD: Kibrahacha Tel: 582-2007
S. NICOLAS: San Nicolas Tel: 584-5712

INFORMATION	118
SETAR	582-2116
TAXI	582-5900
TAXI-TAS	587-5900
PROF. TAXI	588-0035
TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
SERVICE ARUBA	583-3232

CRUISESHIP

Jan. 5 Seabourn Pride Norwegian Sun

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American Airline	582-2700
Avianca	588-0059
Dutch Antilles	588-1900
Insel Air	588-9314
Jet Blue	588-2244
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Women in Difficulties

Foundation

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201058

Texting, dialing while driving raises crash risk

MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP Chief Medical Writer

A sophisticated, real-world study confirms that dialing, texting or reaching for a cellphone while driving raises the risk of a crash or near-miss, especially for younger drivers. But the research also produced a surprise: Simply talking on the phone did not prove dangerous, as it has in other studies.

This one did not distinguish between handheld and hands-free devices — a major weakness.

And even though talking doesn't require drivers to take their eyes off the road, it's hard to talk on a phone without first reaching for it or dialing a number — things that raise the risk of a crash, researchers note.

Earlier work with simulators, test-tracks and cellphone records suggests that risky driving increases when people are on cellphones, especially teens. The 15-to-20-year-old age group accounts for 6 percent of all drivers but 10 percent of traffic deaths and 14 percent of police-reported crashes with injuries.

For the new study, researchers at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute installed video cameras, global positioning systems, lane trackers, gadgets to measure speed and acceleration, and other sensors in the cars of 42 newly licensed drivers 16 or 17 years old, and 109 adults with an average of 20 years behind the wheel. The risk of a crash or near-miss among young drivers increased more than sevenfold if they were dialing or reaching for a cellphone and fourfold if they were sending or receiving a text message. The risk also



In this Dec. 19, 2013 photo, a motorist talks on a cell phone while driving on an expressway in Chicago.

Associated Press

rose if they were reaching for something other than a phone, looking at a road-side object or eating.

Among older drivers, only dialing a cellphone increased the chances of

a crash or near miss. However, that study began before texting became more common, so researchers don't know if it is as dangerous for them as it is for teens.

Engaging in distractions increased as time went on among novice drivers but not among experienced ones.

The National Institutes of Health and the National

Highway Traffic Safety Administration paid for the research. Results are in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

David Strayer, a University of Utah scientist who has done research on this topic, said the findings that merely talking on a phone while driving was not dangerous is "completely at odds with what we found." The study methods and tools may have underestimated risks because video cameras capture wandering eyes but can't measure cognitive distraction, he said.

"You don't swerve so much when you're talking on a cellphone; you just might run through a red light," and sensors would not necessarily pick up anything amiss unless a crash occurred, Strayer said.

As for texting, "we all agree that things like taking your eyes off the road are dangerous," he said. □

Mexico subway dig turns up unusual Aztec offering

MARK STEVENSON
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Archaeologists announced Tuesday that excavations for a Mexico City subway extension have turned up what appears to be an unusual Aztec offering: a dog's skull with holes that indicate it was displayed on a ritual skull rack normally reserved for human sacrifice victims.

Excavators also found a woman's skull and two men's skulls with similar perforations around the temple, which allowed them to be mounted on a public display rack known as a tzompantli.



In this May 26, 2009 image released by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), the skeleton of a person lies next to an incense holder after it was found during excavations for the newest line 12 of the subway in Mexico City.

Associated Press

The find dates to between 1350 and 1521 and is the first time a dog's skull has been found along with a

skull rack, according to Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History. The skull racks usually displayed the severed heads of captured warriors from rival groups, who were sacrificed as an offering to the gods. Few of them have actually been excavated.

"We know that during the conquest some horse skulls were placed on this type of structure, but not dogs," said institute archaeologist Maria de Jesus Sanchez, referring to an account documented by the Spanish conquerors who found the remains of captured colleagues as well as their horses displayed on a rack. Since the Aztecs didn't have horses, they may have taken the animals as sacred beasts, or something joined with the horse's rider.

The Aztecs did have dogs, albeit smaller ones that seldom barked, so they would probably have known what they were putting on

display.

"Perhaps there are dogs associated with these altars in other sites and we don't know it," de Jesus said. One possible explanation might have been dogs' ritual importance in death or burial rites. According to some pre-Hispanic beliefs, a dog accompanied his owner in the underworld. University of Florida archaeologist Susan Gillespie, who was not involved in the project, wrote in an email that the appearance of the female skull was also unusual.

"What little information we have on the use of skull racks indicates that they were the resting place for the heads of war captives, and females generally were not taken in war," Gillespie wrote. The excavations were carried out as part of a 15-mile (24.5 kilometer) expansion of the city's subway station. They also uncovered about 100 burials, mostly of children. □

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'Big Bang Theory' star Kaley Cuoco gets married



Copyright 2014 The This Sept. 20, 2013 file photo shows actress Kaley Cuoco, right, and Ryan Sweeting at the 2013 Entertainment Weekly Pre-Emmy Party in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

SANTA SUSANA, Calif. (AP) — "The Big Bang Theory" star Kaley Cuoco is starting off 2014 as a Mrs. Cuoco's representative, Melissa Kates, says the actress wed tennis pro Ryan Sweeting in a New Year's Eve ceremony at a ranch in Santa Susana, California. Afterward, the 28-year-old Cuoco posted a few photos with

her 26-year-old husband on her Instagram account. She wore a pink Vera Wang wedding gown and captioned one picture as "Greatest night of my entire life." The couple dated for three months before getting engaged in September. Cuoco previously dated her "Big Bang" co-star Johnny Galecki. □

'American Hustle,' 'Her' get Producers Guild nods

LOS ANGELES (AP) — David O. Russell's corruption tale "American Hustle," Spike Jonze's digital romance "Her" and Steve McQueen's historic saga "12 Years a Slave" are among the film nominees for the Producers Guild of America.

Ten films were announced as contenders Thursday, including the Woody Allen comedy "Blue Jasmine," Somali pirate thriller "Captain Phillips," AIDS drama "Dallas Buyers Club," lost-in-space odyssey "Gravity," small-town comedy "Nebraska," making-of-"Mary Poppins" story "Saving Mr. Banks" and stock-broker feat "The Wolf of Wall Street."

The guild, a company of Hollywood producers, grants its 25th annual awards on Jan. 19. Winners of the top honor often go on to take the best-picture prize at the Academy Awards, held on March 2. □



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Cate Blanchett in a scene from "Blue Jasmine."

Associated Press

NASA responds to Beyonce's Challenger sample use

CHRIS TALBOTT
AP Music Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — NASA officials say the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster "should never be trivialized" in response to a new song from Beyonce that features an audio sample recorded just after the craft exploded on takeoff in 1986, killing all seven crewmembers. The space agency issued the statement late Tuesday after the pop star began to receive criticism from Challenger families and others for using the short sample that includes the words "major malfunction" as an allusion to a failed relationship.

"The Challenger accident is an important part of our history; a tragic reminder that space exploration is risky and should never be trivialized," said the statement from Lauren B. Worley, NASA's press secretary. "NASA works every day to honor the legacy of our fallen astronauts as we carry out our mission to reach for new heights and explore the universe." NASA's response came after Beyonce explained the use of the short snippet in a statement to ABC News Tuesday that stopped short of an apology. The sample appears at the beginning of her song "XO" from her new self-titled album.

Among those critical of the sample was June Scobee Rodgers, widow of Challenger commander Dick Scobee. She told ABC in a statement that she was disappointed and described the use of the sample as "emotionally difficult." "My heart goes out to the families of those lost in the Challenger disaster," Beyonce's statement said. "The song 'XO' was recorded with the sincerest intention to help heal those who have lost loved ones and to remind us that unexpected things happen, so love and appreciate every minute that you have with those who mean the most to you. □



In this Feb. 3, 2013 file photo, recording artist Beyonce performs at Super Bowl XLVII, in New Orleans.

Associated Press

Though 'Spider-Man' leaving Broadway, a part stays

MARK KENNEDY

AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Before Spider-Man takes his final bow on Broadway this weekend, the show is swinging into history in another way.

Producers of "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark" said Thursday that the Smithsonian Institution is inducting one of the hero's first costumes into the permanent collection at the National Museum of American History in Washington.

The red-and-blue costume designed by Eiko Ishioka and worn by actor Reeve Carney will join a collection of iconic Americana that boasts the ruby slippers from "The Wizard of Oz," a Kermit the Frog puppet, the first car driven across the United States, a lock of Sir Walter Scott's hair, Tony Hawk's first skateboard and a light bulb made by Thomas Edison. "The Smithsonian is the gatekeeper when it comes to the American popular culture canon, so this feels like a kind of coronation for all of us," said Michael Cohl, a lead producer. Ishioka, an Academy Award-winner who designed surrealistic costumes for such films as "Mirror Mirror," "The Cell" and Francis Ford Coppola's "Dracula," earned a Tony nomination



In this theater publicity image released by The O and M Co., Christopher Tierney portrays Spider-Man in the musical "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark," in New York.

Associated Press

for her big, bold costumes for "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark," including the tricky task of freshening Spider-Man's iconic look.

To make it, Ishioka, who died in 2012, came up with a new spider design on the costume's chest and had to make sure her new suit didn't stray too far from Marvel Comic's signature look, according to Tracy Roberts, Ishioka's studio manager.

Ishioka ignored the comic book's Crayola-like blue and red for a sophisticated

ed ombre effect in which shades of color graduate from light to dark or dark to light. A close look at Spider-Man's suit reveals many variations of color as the red arms gradually bleed into the blue legs. "She wanted to make it her own, and I think she achieved that in a really great way by painting within the lines but really giving it her own spin," said Roberts.

Roberts, who is eager for the general public to appreciate Ishioka's diverse designs legacy, said the

Smithsonian's honor is a "wonderful way to recognize her body of work." Among Ishioka's accomplishments were the sets and costumes for David Henry Hwang's 1988 drama "M. Butterfly" and the costumed for the opening ceremony of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

"It's wonderful that this great designer from Japan who has done so many different international design projects would find her work at this incredibly iconic American place,"

said Roberts. "It's a great honor."

"Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark" — Broadway's most expensive show, with a price tag of \$75 million — had a rocky start, with six delays in its opening night, injuries to several actors, a shake-up that led to the firing of original director Julie Taymor and critical drubbing. But the musical, with songs by U2's Bono and The Edge, became a hit in 2011 and was among Broadway's biggest earners until springing a leak this summer. It closes Saturday after having played 1,268 performances and grossing more than \$200 million. Next stop: Las Vegas.

Though the timing of the Smithsonian's honor coincides with the show's closing, Cohl waves away any suggestion that it is a vindication for the beleaguered cast and crew.

"I don't know if I'd call it vindication, but it's very satisfying. Theater is such an ephemeral art form — which is what makes it so thrilling and so frustrating. No matter how long it runs in Las Vegas, or how many cities it plays, it's still impermanent. So there is something very satisfying about knowing a piece of our show will be preserved forever."



This photo provided by NBC shows James Avery as Philip Banks from season 2 of the TV series, "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air." Avery, 65, the bulky character actor who laid down the law as the Honorable Philip Banks has died.

Associated Press

James Avery of 'Fresh Prince' fame dead at 68

NEW YORK (AP) — James Avery, the bulky character actor who laid down the law at home and on the job as the Honorable Philip Banks in "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air," has died.

Avery's publicist, Cynthia Snyder, told The Associated Press that Avery died Tuesday in Glendale, California, following complications from open heart surgery. He was 68, Snyder said.

Avery, who stood more than 6 feet (2 meters) tall, played the family patriarch and a wealthy attorney and judge on the popular TV comedy that launched the acting career of Will Smith as Banks'

troublemaking nephew.

The sitcom, which aired on NBC from 1990 to 1996, was set in the Banks' mansion, to which Smith's character was sent from Philadelphia when things got tough in his own neighborhood. Fans came to know the imposing Banks as "Uncle Phil."

Avery liked to say that the way to be an actor was to act, and he had a busy and diverse career before, during and after "Fresh Prince."

His TV credits included "Grey's Anatomy," "NYPD Blue" and "Dallas," and among his many films were "Fletch," "Nightflyers" and "8 Million Ways to Die." His voice alone

brought him many jobs, notably as Shredder in the animated TV series "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles."

According to Snyder, he will be seen in the film "Wish I Was Here," directed by Zach Braff and scheduled to premiere later this month at the Sundance festival.

Avery grew up in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and served in the Navy in Vietnam in the late 1960s. After returning to the states, he settled in California and studied drama and literature at the University of California at San Diego.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara, and stepson, Kevin Waters.

Fiscal Fever Breaks



PAUL KRUGMAN
© 2013 New York Times

In 2012, President Barack Obama, ever hopeful that reason will prevail, predicted that his re-election would finally break the GOP's "fever." It didn't.

But the intransigence of the right wasn't the only disease troubling America's body politic in 2012. We were also suffering from fiscal fever: the insistence by virtually the entire political and media establishment that budget deficits were our most important and urgent economic problem, even though the federal government could borrow at incredibly low interest rates. Instead of talking about mass unemployment and soaring inequality, Washington was almost exclusively focused on the alleged need to slash spending (which would worsen the jobs crisis) and hack away at the social safety net (which would worsen inequality).

So the good news is that this fever, unlike the fever of the Tea Party, has finally broken.

True, the fiscal scolds are still out there, and still getting worshipful treatment from some news organizations. As the Columbia Journalism Review recently noted, many reporters retain the habit of "treating deficit-cutting as a non-ideological objective while portraying other points of view as partisan or political." But the scolds are no longer able to define the bounds of respectable opinion. For example, when the usual suspects recently piled on Sen. Elizabeth Warren over her call for an expansion of Social Security, they clearly ended up enhancing her stature.

What changed? I'd suggest that at least four things happened to discredit deficit-cutting ideology.

First, the political premise behind "centrism" - that moderate Republicans would be willing to meet Democrats halfway in a Grand Bargain combining tax hikes and spending cuts - became untenable. There are no moderate Republicans. To the extent that there are debates between the Tea Party and non-Tea Party wings of the GOP, they're about political strategy, not policy substance. Second, a combination of rising tax receipts and falling spending has caused federal borrowing to plunge. This is actually a bad thing, because premature deficit-cutting damages our still-weak economy - in fact,

we'd probably be close to full employment now but for the unprecedented fiscal austerity of the past three years. But a falling deficit has undermined the scare tactics so central to the "centrist" cause. Even longer-term projections of federal debt no longer look at all alarming.

Speaking of scare tactics, 2013 was the year journalists and the public finally grew weary of the boys who cried wolf. There was a time when audiences listened raptly to forecasts of fiscal doom - for example, when Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson, co-chairmen of Obama's debt commission, warned that a severe fiscal crisis was likely within two years. But that was almost three years ago.

Finally, over the course of 2013 the intellectual case for debt panic collapsed. Normally, technical debates among economists have relatively little impact on the political world, because politicians can almost always find experts - or, in many cases, "experts" - to tell them what they want to hear. But what happened in the year behind us may have been an exception.

For those who missed it or have forgotten, for several years fiscal scolds in both Europe and the United States leaned heavily on a paper by two highly-respected economists, Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff, suggesting that government debt has severe negative effects on growth when it exceeds 90 percent of GDP. From the beginning, many economists expressed skepticism about this claim. In particular, it seemed immediately obvious that slow growth often causes high debt, not the other way around - as has surely been the case, for example, in both Japan and Italy. But in political circles the 90 percent claim nonetheless became gospel.

Then Thomas Herndon, a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, reworked the data, and found that the apparent cliff at 90 percent disappeared once you corrected a minor error and added a few more data points.

Now, it's not as if fiscal scolds really arrived at their position based on statistical evidence. As the old saying goes, they used Reinhart-Rogoff the way a drunk uses a lamppost - for support, not illumination. Still, they suddenly lost that support, and with it the ability to pretend that economic necessity justified their ideological agenda. Still, does any of this matter? You could argue that it doesn't - that fiscal scolds may have lost control of the conversation, but that we're still doing terrible things like cutting off benefits to the long-term unemployed. But while policy remains terrible, we're finally starting to talk about real issues like inequality, not a fake fiscal crisis. And that has to be a move in the right direction. □



For 2014, Tweet Less, Read More



FRANK BRUNI
© 2013 New York Times

My mother was always lavish with advice, little of it original - she was hardly the first to caution against horizontal stripes for anyone broader than Barbie - but much of it unimpeachable. As 2013 draws to a close and I think about the fever pitch and jagged edges of so much of its discourse, I find myself flashing back on one of her caveats in particular.

"Count to 10 before you speak," she frequently said, and she meant not just that you can't take back what's already been uttered. She meant that pauses are the spaces in which passions cool, civility gets its oxygen and wisdom quite possibly finds its wings. She meant that slowing things down often classes them up.

What would she have made of the social media born long after she died? Of a world in which so many of us, entranced by the opportunity for instant expression and an immediate audience, post unformed thoughts, half-baked wit or splenetic reactions before we can even count to three?

It feels at times as if contemplation has given way to expectation, with speed overtaking sense and nuance exiting the equation. And I'm talking about more than the rising count of reputations forfeited and ca-

reers dashed in 140 characters or fewer, of crackups like that of a prominent New York publicist who recently tweeted what she apparently meant to be a joke about not having to worry about AIDS in Africa because she's white. I'm talking about a revved-up metabolism and roughened-up manners.

Lately there's been a bit of academic attention to our etiquette online, which is where so many of us spend more and more of our time. It rightly notes how much rudeness makes its way onto message boards and into Facebook threads, how quickly the back-and-forth on websites turns nasty.

That happens in part because the exchanges are disembodied: We don't have to face whomever we're lashing out at. But it's also because they're impulsive. Their timbre conforms to their tempo. Both are coarse. Conversely, there was talk this year about the benefits of an activity that's in some ways the antithesis of texting and tweeting with their rat-tat-tat rhythm. That activity is the reading of fiction. According to some researchers, people who settle into it are more empathetic - more attuned to what those around them think and feel - than people who don't.

I buy that, and not from a vantage point of cultural snobbery or because I'm a Luddite. Trust me, I watch inexcusable amounts of television, much of it proudly lowbrow. I consume most of my newspapers and magazines online and almost all of my books on an iPad, and I depend gratefully on email and instant messaging to maintain friendships that might otherwise have fallen by the wayside. But I'd bet big on real reading, fiction or nonfiction, as a prompt for empathy and a whole lot more: coolheadedness, maybe even open-mindedness, definitely deliberation. It doesn't just yank you outside of yourself, making you consider other viewpoints with-

out allowing for the incessant interjection and exaltation of your own. It slackens the pace. Forces a pause.

Last week I lingered over an excellent book, "The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion," by the social psychologist Jonathan Haidt. Published in 2012, it plumbs the relationship between emotion and reason.

And one of Haidt's observations, relevant to an era in which partisans stake their ground and fortify their opinions at the start rather than the end of a discussion, is that people are more likely to be moved by information that challenges their prejudices if they're prevented from responding to it straightaway and it has time to sink in, to steep.

Is there enough such time these days? Amid what's trending on Twitter and swiftly going viral throughout cyberspace, is there an adequate premium on it? In 2014 and beyond, one of our challenges will be to exploit the great advantages of social media - as town crier, as public square, as connector - while sidestepping the pitfalls, chief among them the encouragement of, and reward for, hasty pronouncements, which are all too often intemperate ones. On social media, on many blogs and along other byways of the Internet, the person you disagree with isn't just misinformed but moronic, corrupt, evil. Complaints become rants. Rants become diatribes. And this tendency travels to cable news shows, Congress and statehouses, where combatants shout first and ask questions later. For more than two decades, there's been a celebration of slow food. Over the past few years, we've proved receptive to slow TV. What we really need is slow debate. It would trade the sugary highs and lows of rapid-fire outrage for a more balanced diet. We'd be healthier. Probably happier, too. □

Carrying On Presidential Tradition, One Round At A Time

ASHLEY PARKER

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KANEOHE, Hawaii - No one should ever question President Barack Obama's passion for golf. He has played some of the country's most picturesque courses, held a debt-limit "golf summit" with House Speaker John A. Boehner, taken on Tiger Woods and found time to steal away for a round in political good times and bad.

The extent of Obama's love of golf has been on display during his winter vacation in Hawaii, where he has played seven out of his 12 days here, for as much as six hours at a time. On one outing, he played so slowly he could get in only 17 holes before it became too dark to continue.

"I don't know how he can play so much freaking golf, man," said Howard Dashefsky, the director of sales and communications at Pacific Links Hawaii. "My back would fall off."

Obama's dedication has not gone unnoticed by Republicans, who have



President Barack Obama smiles as he walks from 18th green at Mid-Pacific County Club in Kailua, Hawaii, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014, as he golfs with Marty Nesbitt, Bobby Titcomb, Sam Kass, Marvin Nicholson, and Andrew Dibble.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)



President Barack Obama makes his approach shot to the 18th green at Mid-Pacific County Club in Kailua, Hawaii, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014. The first family is in Hawaii for their annual holiday vacation.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

taken advantage politically. In its gimmicky list of recommended New Year's resolutions for Obama, the Republican National Committee offered this one: "I resolve to spend less time on the golf course."

Historically, Obama is hardly alone on the putting green. If horse racing is the "sport of kings," golf is the sport of U.S. presidents. Fifteen of the past 18 of them have played, and their approach to the game has often illustrated their character in office.

According to Don Van Natta Jr., author of "First Off the Tee: Presidential Hackers, Duffers, and Cheaters From Taft to Bush," Dwight D. Eisenhower, famous for his vacations and delegating White House business to aides, played 36 holes a week.

Richard M. Nixon was awkward on the course, and a cheat. Bill Clinton was famous for his mulligans, or do-overs. The two George Bushes were quick to take action.

Obama is known for his slow, deliberative play. On the 18th hole at the Mid Pacific Country Club on Oahu last week, Obama crouched to survey his final shot, took several practice swings and then putted, with the ball stopping just short of the hole. By the time he had finished, roughly five hours had elapsed since his arrival. (The PGA frowns on slow play, threatening penalties.)

"Six hours is an especially long round of golf, and five is on the long side, too," said Van Natta, a former New York Times correspondent.

"He strives to be a bogey-a-hole golfer; that's a handicap of 18," Van Natta added, explaining how Obama aims to finish 1-over par on every hole. "That's still pretty respectable."

In Hawaii, Obama has tackled the courses at Mid Pacific (a 1926 course by designer Seth Raynor), the Ko'olau Golf Club ("one of the country's most punishing layouts," according to Golf.com and surround-

ed by stunning volcanic peaks) and the Royal Hawaiian Golf Club (known to locals as Jurassic Park for its lush tropical surroundings.). He has also played the course at Marine Corps Base Hawaii here several times.

Obama's methodical style of play has its defenders. Dashefsky called it the "way it's supposed to be played."

The president's long hours on the course are one of his few chances to escape the demands of the White House and relax, said people familiar with his game. His golf partners here are a familiar cast of characters: White House aides (Sam Kass, the Obamas' chef, and Marvin Nicholson, the trip director); two longtime Chicago friends (Marty Nesbitt and Eric Whitaker); and buddies from his time in high school here (Mike Ramos and Bobby Titcomb).

Obama's style is in contrast to the way both Bushes approached the game. They were famous for their speed, routinely playing 18 holes in less than three hours, in what was sometimes called "aerobic golf" or "polo golf."

George H.W. Bush had a personal best of an hour and 24 minutes for 18 holes. "We weren't trying to break a record," said Ken Raynor, a longtime golf partner for Bush family members who is the head golf pro at Coral Creek Club in Placida, Fla., and a pro at Cape Arundel Golf Club in Kennebunkport, Maine.

"The activity level was just at that pace."

The president most dedicated to golf may have been Eisenhower, who played nearly 800 rounds during his eight years in office.

He became known as the "golfer in chief" and - given his fondness for playing 18 holes on Wednesdays and Sundays - as the inventor of the "36-hole workweek."

In comparison, according to records kept by the CBS News correspondent Mark Knoller, Obama has played 158 rounds. □